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EXPLORING THE OUTBACK: From MUNGO to COONGIE LAKES.

The roadside on the way to Mungo National Park was the site of our first camp. After one day's travel into the interior, the landscape was transformed and although the plant families were familiar, the species were all unknown to this newcomer to the outback. Bluebush and saltbush in subtle colour gradients dotted the sandy soil between stands of local casuarina (belah) and patches of shrubby, shiny green hop-bushes and eremophila. Many of the birds, too, were new to me and often these were the most vocal - a group of apostlebirds, spiny-cheeked honeyeaters, a grey butcherbird, mallee ringnecks and crested pigeons as well as thornbills, sittellas, rufous whistlers, jacky winters and galahs.

Mungo National Park is part of the Willandra Lakes world heritage area and an important archaeological site, with evidence of human settlement up to 40,000 years ago. The long-dry lake-bed stretches away to the crescent of sandhills known as lunettes, now eroded by overgrazing and sculptured by the wind into dramatic flowing forms, with a view from the crest that competes with the wedgetail's. There was a wide variety of tenacious plants, many with the odd flower and each with its own solution to survival in this semi-arid area where the blue sky is infinite, the land ancient and patient.

Next day at Menindee in the Kinchega National Park, the vertical element returned in the form of tall redgums, coolabah and blackbox by the slow-flowing Darling River which feeds the chain of lakes, creating an oasis in the sand plains. The thickly-wooded river-flats were alive with birds, the most vocal being honeyeaters - spiny-cheeked, striped and white-plumed. First settled in the 1850's, Kinchega Station at one time covered one million acres, grazing sheep with mostly aboriginal labour until it was proclaimed a national park in 1967. The massive woolshed still stands today.

We headed through Broken Hill, north-west to the border. Few maps show these back tracks which are mostly private access roads for the large cattle stations. The dingo fence between N.S.W. and S.A. is broached by gates at intervals and we explored the country in both States. Its remoteness was echoed in the primeval stillness, with only the occasional sighting of emus and kangaroos and mercifully few cattle. No

traffic passed; the homesteads were rarely visible. We walked around Old Quinyambie homestead, eerie and deserted. A headstone in distant Tibooburra cemetery records the death at this homestead of two young girls from heat exhaustion, less than 40 years ago.

Earlier stands of cypress-pine had by now given way to low scrub and saltbush, with quite a variety of struggling flowers, as well as nardoo, in the dry creek beds. The meandering tracks along and over the sandhills made for slow progress. We put up our tents on a rise not far from a gushing hot bore where someone had set up an old bathtub. That night, by the light of the full moon, it was an open-air bathroom to remember.

We left the S.A. side of the fence at Old Quinyambie Gate and made our way north, skirting Lake Boolka, which was full for the first time since 1974. The top of the fence was just visible in the middle of the water. We saw a group of black-tailed native-hens here, as well as many pink-eared ducks and red-necked avocets at other nearby ephemeral waterholes.

Then it was east to Milparinka, where a few classic stone buildings still stand above the bare gibber-rises as memorials to the gold-fever of the 1880's and a once flourishing pastoral industry. Today, only the pub is still in use, whereas Tibooburra, our next destination, 40 km to the north, with a similar history, still survives as a regional centre (population 150!). The little township of stone, corrugated iron, and fibro lies amongst boulder-strewn granite hills. These shelter a fascinating variety of desert plants - hakeas, wattles, cassias, succulents, saltbushes, and kangaroo grass, many with one or two flowers or hung with curious seed pods. Near our camp in Dead Horse Gully we found the first Sturt's desert pea of the season.

The tall trees and more stable vegetation of Tibooburra township make it a haven for birds. The sky was never empty of wheeling black kites, while bunched groups of white-breasted woodswallows graced the power-lines. Yellow-faced miners and white-plumed and spiny-cheeked honey-eaters were abundant in the street gums., Other common birds around the town included mudlarks, little corellas, welcome swallows, galahs, magpies and - sparrows. Following a sandy creek-bed near town, I discovered a noisy group of chirruping wedgebills and striped honey-eaters, as well as a pair of red capped robins, with variegated fairy-wrens and black-faced woodswallows on the plain.

The road north-west to Innamincka via Cameron Corner passes through a distinctive terrain of scrub-dotted parallel red sandhills, punctuated by grey flood pans, green-blue with emergent plants. The sandhills fell away and the vegetation changed again as we reached the old Strzelecki Track which crosses the Strzelecki Creek floodplain. The grey-blue bushes and dull twisted trees reflected the lowering sky as light rain began to fall. To be on the safe side, it was decided we should continue straight through to Innamincka.

Next day, the weather improved and we set up camp on the banks of Cooper Creek, 16 km from "town" at Cullymurra Waterhole. The great old red-gums and coolabahs by the river were alive with noisy flocks of little corellas and white-plumed honeyeaters, as well as a number of whistling kites. Other birds living near the waterhole were brown treecreepers, grey shrikethrush, mallee ringnecks, red-rumped parrots, galahs, yellow-throated miners, tree martins, black-faced woodswallows, Australian ravens, magpies and magpie larks, a Pacific heron, a little pied cormorant and pelicans. We were lucky to catch sight of two brolgas elegantly picking their way up the bank and later saw a group of seven among the bauhinia trees of the flood plain. Here also were crested pigeons and peaceful doves in the sparse gidgee and mulga.

There was a magnificent view in all directions from the high shrub-dotted sandhills that separate the wide river floodplain from the undulating dry red gibber plains to the south. Once again, remote from sight and sound of "civilisation", the primeval silence in the shimmering afternoon heat was overwhelming. Even the bird calls were muted, and the birds elusive. I saw a red-capped robin, weebills, red-browed pardalote, chestnut-rumped thornbills, white-winged fairy-wrens, and as usual, a curious willie wagtail.

That evening, we took a canoe up the silvered river, past the tangled thickets of lignum and the occasional shy tortoise. The journey back was magic - straight into the setting sun and its golden reflection in the still water.

Day 9 found us at Coongie Lakes, about 2½ hours north-east of Innamincka. This chain of shallow lakes is filled by the floodwaters of Cooper Creek after monsoonal rains in Queensland and has dried up only once since its discovery in 1845 by Sturt.

The shallow reach across the water from our camp on the shore was home to hundreds of waterbirds - dabblers, paddlers and waders - so many known and unknown that I gave up trying to identify them and just enjoyed the wonderful activity. I watched the Caspian tern swooping for fish and was surprised to see sea gulls. At dusk, the pelicans swept in in groups to roost; we heard a commotion as a dingo found a meal on the rookery that night.

Light rain had fallen intermittently over the preceding three weeks and the sandhills between the lake and the north-west arm of the Cooper were dotted with tiny plants. The river flood plain was thick with lignum broached by cattle tracks down to the water. I suppose we could thank the cattle for the flies too. Land birds seen were the same as at Cullymurra, with the addition of diamond doves, white-breasted woodswallows, and a wedge-tailed eagle. We heard a barking owl in the night. The official bird list for the Innamincka Regional Reserve numbers over 170 species.

The homeward journey via Burke and Wills Dig Tree took an unexpected turn when light rain began falling from a darkening sky in the late afternoon in remote south-west Queensland, south of Nappa-Merrie. This channel country turns to quicksand when wet and we were hard-pressed to find a camping spot firm enough for the vehicles and with room for our tents among the spinifex. Intermittent rain continued all night, so it was a bleak early start next morning, leaving little time for exploring yet another fascinating semi-arid ecosystem. The landscape and vegetation we passed through on the trip were far more varied than I'd expected; here were pale lilac fan-flowers, many vigorous young bushes of swainsona, a pigface with cerise flowers (closed), and porcupine grass (spinifex) - all new to me.

The rain set in as we set off and the track rapidly became almost unnavigable, with sticky red mud flying in all directions. With the trailer jackknifing on the slippery surface, it was slow, difficult driving and quite an experience. We were all mightily relieved to reach Tibooburra, and with only minor damage. The 2 inches of rain that fell (5 inches annually) must have pleased the owners of the caravan park as much as the farmers as a succession of mud-caked vehicles crawled in seeking shelter.

It was three days before the roads were officially reopened and we could head for home. Needless to say, we are already making plans to return....

Contrary to expectation, the inland country we covered seemed in pretty good shape to an outsider. The introduced weeds that are changing the landscape in Victoria seemed to disappear north of the Murray, apart from the ubiquitous paddy-melons in the border country between N.S.W and S.A. We glimpsed a couple of goats early on, but apart from rabbit burrows, brumbies and cattle by Cooper Creek, we saw few introduced feral animals. Cattle seemed to be the main problem. All the national parks in this fragile region were formerly sheep or cattle stations, so hopefully a policy of conversion will continue.

As for human intrusion, regulations do apply. In South Australia, a \$50 desert pass is required for remote areas. It includes a folder of maps, self-guided tours and a code of conduct. At Coongie Lakes, no fires were allowed and the regional ranger at Innamincka was careful to limit the number of visitors at the Lakes at any one time. With more people venturing into the outback each year, it was encouraging to see such a considered approach.

We travelled with Pat and Cliff Barret of Strathfieldsaye - 4 couples and 3 crew in 2 4WD vehicles and a supply trailer. Barret Safaris specialise in reasonably priced small group camping tours off the beaten track.

Susanna Starr

EXCURSION TO SHICER GULLY

Twelve hardy souls, including four Melbourne imports, braved a raw day on Saturday 12 June to see what was out and about at Hill Top Nursery and along the Shicer Gully Track.

Just to get out of the cocoon of a car was hard enough and then to be lashed by hail as a storm came through seemed a daunting start to finding birds, but we persevered and started to walk away from shelter. Miraculously the clouds cleared, the sun came out and stayed with us until nearly back to the cars, 4 km and two hours later. There was enough growing and calling along the roadside to keep me interested and we only turned for home at the prospect of facing a gypsy-like camp encumbered by car bodies, shacks made out of tip-material, and uncertain tempered dogs.

There were good examples of box and ironbark communities with varying density of understory, and another look in spring could be rewarding.

Eastern Rosella	Grey Shrike-thrush	White-eared Honeyeater
Galah	Grey Fantail	Eastern Spinebill
Masked Lapwing	Buff-tailed Thornbill	Spotted pardalote
Kookaburra	Brown Thornbill	White-winged Chough (h)
Scarlet Robin	White-throated Treecreeper	Magpie
Blue Wren .		C.M.

OBSERVATIONS

WATTLES IN FLOWER include

Mt Morgan Wattle (*A. podalyriaefolia*) in flower in the Broadford nature strips on May 16th. Also in Stewart St.

Flinder's Range Wattle (*A. iteaphylla*). In full flower.

Barrier Range Wattle (*A. beckleri*). In Hargraves St.

Spreading Wattle (*A. genistifolia*) has been in flower in the local bushland since the New Year. It is still flowering profusely.

Woolly Wattle (*A. lanigera*). Has been seen in flower near Puckapunyal.

Golden Wattle (*A. pycnantha*) was in flower between Chewton and Fryerstown on May 29th, and at Shicer Gully on June 12. This is unusually early for this wattle - its peak is in early spring.

Gold-dust Wattle (*A. acinacea*) is usually one of the last of the local wattles to come into flower, but one was well in bloom at the end of May. This specimen was at the edge of a roadside in Glenluce.

WASPS AND SPIDERS. A wasp's nest was uncovered in the shed. It had a supply of dead spiders. Spiders were brown and yellow, and have not been seen elsewhere in the property. However, they have apparently been found by the wasp. (BW)

COCKATOOS. A large flock has been seen at Harcourt (BE)

WHITE-BROWED SCRUB-WREN has been seen in a Wheeler St garden. This is the first sighting. (GB)

SCALE-COVERED GREEN MALLEE (*Eucalyptus viridis*) is very attractive to European Wasps.

SUGAR GLIDERS were observed passing through a Chewton property.

SANDON IN MAY

This list is from May 17th. Birds seen at the bird bath were

Crimson Rosella	Wrens	Wh-throated Treecreeper (pr)
Scarlet Robin (pair)	Striated Thornbills	White-eared Honeyeater
Grey Fantail		

Birds seen on the property were

White-faced Heron	Hooded Robin (pr)	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
Brown Falcon	Jacky Winter	Fuscous Honeyeater
Painted Button Quail	Golden Whistler (m + imm)	White-plumed Honeyeater
(first sighting here)	Grey Shrike-thrush (pr)	Brown-headed Honeyeater
Masked Lapwing (pair)	Restless Flycatcher	White-naped Honeyeater
Galahs	Willie Wagtail	Spotted pardalote
Eastern Rosellas	Speckled Warbler (pr)	Silvereyes
Fantailed Cuckoo	Weebill	Red-browed Firetail
Tawny Frogmouth (first	Buff-rumped Thornbill	Diamond Firetail
sighting - catching	Yellow-rumped Thornbill	White-winged Choughs
moths at window)	Varied Sittellas	Magpies
Owlet Nightjar	Red Wattlebird	Grey Currawong
Kookaburra	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Australian Raven
Welcome Swallow (pr)		

Most of the few dead birds found here have been first sightings or unusual. They include a raptor which disappeared overnight before we had a chance to identify it, a sick darter that later died and a fantailed cuckoo last June. On our return from holidays, we found the undamaged corpse of a painted button quail at the back door. I was glad a few days later to glimpse another one feeding on the path before it ran for cover in the tussock grass.

Susanna Starr.

KANGAROO ISLAND

Our week on Kangaroo Island started promisingly with a smooth trip across Backstairs Passage to Penneshaw. The morning was cold and there was a frost in the beautiful Inmann Valley as we drove to the ferry terminal at Cape Jervis. Despite the cold we moved onto the front deck as soon as the ropes were taken down in the hope of spotting dolphins

and plenty of birds, but we saw none of the former and few of the latter other than a gull or two, but we were able to watch the island coming closer, and decided even from a distance that we liked the look of Penneshaw and considered the possibility of staying there.

When we left the ferry we first made a beeline for Muggleton's Store and the Tea Rooms, where we both indulged in Devonshire tea, Kangaroo Island style. If you are on a diet, don't go to Kangaroo Island - K.I. to the locals. The homemade scones are served with real cream and homemade raspberry jam. Disgusting! Yum!!

We looked through our K.I. booklet and decided on a cottage, but when we drove around to look at it someone was just moving in, so we drove on and discovered a very tidy one right on the beach. We rang the number displayed in the window, and, yes, it was available, but she would have to come from Kingscote, about an hour's drive, and clean it up as the last people had only moved out in the morning. So we went off for a drive and had a look at the historical cemetery overlooking the township. On the way back we called at Christmas Cove where Matthew Flinders landed on March 28, 1802. It was here that I saw my first Reef Heron. The owner of the cottage, when we went back there, confirmed that they are seen around the rocks quite often. I'm glad that we took her invitation to unload once she arrived, because it gave us a chance to get to talk to her. She told us of places to go that aren't normally on the tourist route, and she also tipped us off that it is wise to travel no more than 60 km/hr on K.I. gravel roads. One of the most intriguing directions was to "turn off at the spotted refrigerator and follow the track for a few kms until you get to a 't' intersection"! Another thing she told us was that there were penguin burrows somewhere in the backyard under the shrubs, and over the road amongst the beach vegetation. On our walk later we saw a number of tracks from the edge of the water to the vegetation and we heard the penguins at night, but never managed to spot them except in the artificial burrows down near the ferry terminal. Robyn, our landlady, also showed us a bag of pellets in the cupboard which were for the Tamar wallabies which would turn up on the front lawn after dark most evenings.

After she'd left and we had a late lunch we went for a walk down to Frenchman's Rock, which is really a replica, the original being in the Treasure Room of the Mortlock Library in Adelaide. The original rock was carved by one of the French explorers, Baudin's, men while they were in the bay in 1803. Even today the French Navy takes part in a ceremony every two or three years at the dome covered rock. I'm told it is very impressive to see the French sailors marching along Frenchmans Terrace to the white dome among the rocks at the end of the beach. The rocks there were quite unusual. Looking rather like slate, they are a dark grey and finely grained. I found from one of the books loaned to us by Robyn that they are a type of sandstone typical of that area and some parts of the Fleurieu Peninsular. It is in layers on quite a steep angle.

The Island has a very interesting geological history. In Christmas Cove there are granite erratics, one of which has a plaque commemorating Flinders visit, and at low tide the glacial striations can be seen at the base of the cliff opposite. It is believed that Backstairs Passage was formed by glacial activity.

There are granite cliffs on the eastern end of the island, but to the west are the laterite soils which give the island its notorious reputation for corrugated roads with buckshot (ironstone) gravel, which can be quite dangerous unless you stick to the 60 kms recommended. In fairness to the island, graders are on the job all the time, but, unless it rains, the road is just as corrugated a week after it is graded. Granite also occurs on the west end of the island, the Remarkable Rocks being a famous group of granite boulders.

After our walk to Frenchman's Rock we went on down to the Fairy Penguin colony. The gardener working there explained that agricultural pipes had been set into the steep bank and a heavy wooden box for a nest was placed at the end, and all covered with sandy loam and shrubs and ground covers planted. There are about 45 numbered burrows, and most seem to be occupied. There is a walk-way for people to watch the penguins coming to the burrows, and this is raised above the ground so that the birds can go under the walk-way, and under the fence without interference. Unlike Phillip Island Penguins they don't all gather at the beach at dusk, but just come in as they are ready all during the night, so you have to be very patient if you wish to see them.

That evening we had our first visit from one of the Tamar wallabies. Extinct now on the mainland, except for a small colony somewhere in S.W. Western Australia, they are gaining plague proportions on the island because of extra feed from pastures and crops, and there are no foxes on the island - nor are there rabbits.

The drive to Kingscote next day was quite an eye-opener. Much of the north and east side of the island is mallee country, nothing like I had pictured at all. There were some lovely smooth trunked eucalypts outside Penneshaw. I think, despite the way they grew, they might have been mallees, too. There was a lot of scrub on the drive, some paddocks, and some patches of salt areas with lots of red glasswort.

We did our shopping and then returned along the road to the spotted refrigerator - somebody's mail box now, and painted with multicoloured spots! and turned down towards the shelly beach that Robyn had told us about. It was a lot further than we had thought, but we found it, and settled down to have lunch while watching a pair of kestrels hunting for theirs. After lunch we climbed down a low loamy cliff to the beach, and the first thing I found was a cowrie, but it was the only one, but there were lots of bubble shells, ear shells, and tapestry shells, as well as more common ones. There were quite a few birds, mainly Pied and Little

Pied Cormorants and Pelicans, but there was one Osprey perched on a post (there seems to be some oyster beds there) and several Pied Oyster Catchers where we walked down to some red cliffs which we think were the beginning of the Red Banks. On the way back we spotted a way up on to the cliff top, and decided to walk along the cliff edge - we thought! We found that the sandy/clayey soil had eroded badly during the heavy rains that people had been talking about having fallen last year, and there were washaways 15-20 feet deep and about 10-12 feet wide, tied together with the roots of the mallees and paperbarks. We finally came to a track which we followed back to the car, and found, not far from the car, that the track had been cut by another washaway. We just walked around the head of it, but were glad we didn't try to follow the track any further in the car. The thing that fascinated me so much at this spot was the size of the Cranberry Heath plants. They must have been 2 or 3 feet across and a foot high, and they were every where, and smothered in flowers - and my camera wasn't working properly! (I did solve that problem before we left the island.)

Before we drove off I studied the map and realised we could go on to American River a back way from there, and this we did. There were dozens of Swans and Grey Teal on the bay.

From there we headed to Mt Thisby, named Mt Prospect by Flinders who climbed it and viewed both Pelican Lagoon, (part of the north coast), and the Southern Ocean at the same time. The Island here is little more than 3 km wide. Mt Thisby is really a sandhill, and was starting to erode, so in 1988 a set of steps - 512 of them according to a text'd message at the bottom - was installed. The view from the top was well worth the effort to get there, and on the way down we were able to watch three kestrels soaring below us.

The next day we drove down to Cape Ganthaume N.P. and Murray's Lagoon. We stopped on the roadside for morning tea. There were lots of mallees, melaleucas and banksias, many in flower, and lots of honeyeaters - mostly New Holland and Red Wattlebirds! There were quite a number of Superb Blue Wrens (a bit bigger and darker than on the mainland), a flock of Musk Lorikeets, Yellow-rumped Pardalotes, White-fronted Chats, Grey Thrushes and Silvereyes, too. There were two interesting plants there. One a grevillea with pale pink open flowers and the other a banksia with reddish flowers in a long cylinder, quite different from the silver banksia, but I haven't been able to identify either.

Almost to the Ranger Station at Murray's Lagoon (after following directions for the wrong, but very pretty, road) we spotted Pied Stilts in a backwater and stopped to watch them. There were also Mountain Ducks, Grey Teal, White-faced Herons, Lapwings and Swans.

We finally arrived at Murrays Lagoon at 12.30, and went to the Ranger Station. He very generously lent his gumboots so that we could go over

to what is now an island. There had been a lot of heavy rain on the island last year, and the lagoon hasn't yet gone right down, and the National Parks people are busily jacking up the house and sheds and building levee banks before the winter rains.

After lunch, watching Willy Wagtails, Grey Fantails, Blue Wrens, White Ibis, Musk Ducks, Australian Ravens, Pelicans, Blue-winged Shovellers, Hoary-headed and Little Grebes, and Hardheads, Doug donned the gumboots and I put on my faithful old walking boots and we paddled over to the island. We noticed little birds moving amongst the grass and weeds, and they proved to be White-fronted Chats and Banded Plovers. Further on there were Mudlarks, a flock of Cape Barren Geese grazing amongst a flock of sheep over on the other side of the water, a Black-shouldered Kite, a Swamp Harrier, Straw-necked Ibis, Little Pied Cormorants and Welcome Swallows.

Having shocked the ranger (his words, not mine!) by saying we hadn't really considered going on to Seal Bay (Everybody goes to Seal Bay!) he tempted me with the possibility of Hooded Plovers on the beach, so we set off, as it wasn't really very far - and struck our first real K.I. corrugations. No wonder one of the Rangers told us that she puts her car up on the ramp and tightens all the bolts every 4 or 5 weeks! The hour among the Sea Lions at Seal Bay was an interesting one. It sorted out some misconceptions of mine about seals and sea lions. The Ranger we were with explained that the sea lion is essentially a land animal, just going into the water to fish. We spotted one about 400 yards inland under the shrubs on a dune and another down in a hollow basking in the sun. Apparently on a cold, windy day they will go up to a kilometre inland to get out of the wind. We were the only ones with the Ranger on that tour and that is always a privilege when that person is as knowledgeable as this man was. The Hooded Plovers? They'd been there in the morning!

Rita Mills. (to be continued)

[Note: Both Silver Banksia (with flat, entire leaves) and Desert Banksia (with toothed leaves) both grow on Kangaroo Island. These are the only two South Australian Banksias. Ed.]

MORE NAME CHANGES FOR PLANTS

REMOTE-FLOWERED RUSH which was for many years known as *Juncus sp "A"* now has a name. As expected, it is *Juncus remotiflorus*. Remote-flowered Rush is one of the most common rushes in the district, and is often found close to dams or close to damp spots.

SEMI-SOLID RUSH? Another rush to be named is *Juncus semisolidus*, formerly known as *Juncus sp "O"*. The pith of this rush is continuous near the base, but is interrupted by air spaces in the upper part. The new name reflects this feature. Should we call it the "Semi-solid rush"?

RED IRONBARK. The correct name for the local species of Red Ironbark is now *Eucalyptus tricarpa*. The most obvious difference between this species and *E. sideroxylon* is ... the number of fruit and buds.

Buds and fruit in 3s *E. tricarpa*
 Buds and fruit in 7s *E. sideroxylon*

There may also be a difference in nectar flow, which is of significance to nectar feeders. For example, the Red Ironbarks in the Chiltern Forest are multi-flowered. We will need to examine the ironbarks planted in local streets to determine their correct identity.

E.P.

BIRDWATCHING ON JUNE 7th

The excursion was the combined U3A and CFNC outing on Thursday morning, to McManus Road, with a walk to the forest along Escape Track, and along Odgers Road. A mob of Kangaroos, with young, was also seen.

Emus!!	Scarlet Robin	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
White-faced Heron	Blue Wren	White-plumed Honeyeater
Galah	Grey Fantail	Striated Pardalote
Crimson Rosella	Willie Wagtail	Red-browed Firetail
Eastern Rosella	Brown Thornbill	Grey Currawong
Masked Lapwing	Striated Thornbill	Magpie
Domestic Pigeon	Buff-tailed Thornbill	Little Raven
Grey Shrike-thrush	White-eared Honeyeater	Australian Raven

FLORA OF VICTORIA

The Club will contribute to the purchase of Volume 1 of the New "Flora of Victoria" for the Castlemaine Library. It is more than 60 years since the last Victorian Flora appeared, and 20 years since "A handbook to Plants in Victoria" was published. There will be four volumes. Volume 1 is a general volume, and discusses the ecology of Victorian Plants. Cost is \$70-\$90, depending on where bought. It is well worth the price.

Meetings: Second Friday of each month (Jan excepted) at Castlemaine High School at 8.00 p.m. Business meetings on the fourth Thursday (Dec excepted) at 7.30 p.m. All members are invited to attend.

Subscriptions 1993 Subscriptions were due in February.
 Single \$12, Family \$18, Student/pensioner \$8, Supporting member \$20
 Newsletter posted: subscription plus \$6.

Committee: B Maund (Pres), B Envall (VP), M Oliver (Sec), G Broadway (Treas), K Turner (Prog), R Mills (PO & asst N/L), E. Perkins (N/L ed), S Parnaby, C Morris and K Meehan.

CASTLEMAINE F.N.C. PROGRAM

Fri 9 July. WADERS OF AUSTRALIA AND OVERSEAS. Speaker is Mark Barter, President of Victorian Wader Study Group. 8 pm at High School.

Sat 10 July. WINTER WATERBIRDS. Excursion. Leader K Turner. 1.30 pm at SEC, Mostyn St. Take binoculars and bird book.

Thurs 15 July. BIRDWATCHING. Joint CFNC/U3A birdwatching outing. Meet Cont Ed car park, Templeton St at 9.30 am. Leader: M Oliver.

Thurs 22 July. WORKING BEE at Burke and Wills Monument, to remove paspalum and other weeds.. 9.30 at the monument. Bring weeders.

Thurs 22 July. BUSINESS MEETING. 7.30 pm at 38 Campbell St.

Fri Aug 13. ISLANDS - how the animals and plants got there. J and M. CALDER. 8.00 pm at High School.

Aug 13-15 BARMAH CAMPOUT. Meeting of WVFNCA at Dharya Centre, Barmah. Copies of booking/information sheets can be obtained from E Perkins.

Sat 14 Aug. Excursion to be arranged.

Thurs 19 Aug. BIRDWATCHING. Joint CFNC/U3A birdwatching outing. Meet Cont Ed carpark at 9.30 am. Leader E. Perkins.

Sat 11 Sept. BOCA bus trip to Maldon.

Thurs 16 Sept. BIRDWATCHING. Joint CFNC/U3A birdwatching outing.

Fri 10 Sept. FIRE MANAGEMENT Talk by Mr Les Vearing. High School at 8 pm

Fri 8 Oct. PAT BINGHAM "BIRD HABITAT - HOW YOU KNOW YOU HAVE GOT IT". High School at 8.00 pm.

Sat 9 Oct. FERNIHURST via Bear's lagoon. Leader C Morris. Leave 27 Doveton St at 9.00 am.

Sun 17 Oct. TARNAGULLA WILDLLOWERS. Excursion with Maryborough FNC. All day trip. Take lunch.

Fri 12 Nov. ROB WATKINS "NATURAL HISTORY IN THE EYES OF A PHOTOGRAPHER" High School at 8.00 pm.

Sat 13 Nov. TERRICK TERRICK. Leave 27 Doveton St at 9.30 am.

Sat 11 Dec. TRENTHAM all day excursion. Leader S. Bruton.

Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club inc. P.O. Box 324, Castlemaine 3450.