

OBJECT: To foster an interest in nature

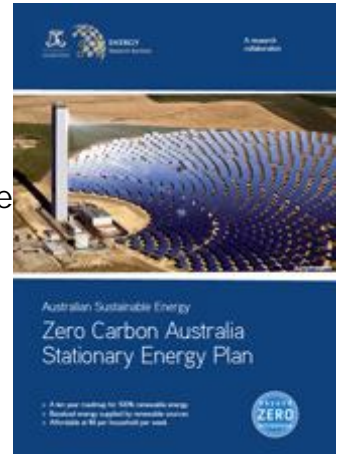
July 2011
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MEETING—THURSDAY 7th July
7:30pm Australian National University
Venue details back page

GETTING THE LOWDOWN ON ZERO EMISSIONS

Speaker: Mark Spain—Volunteer Presenter for Beyond Zero Emissions

Mark will present on the ambitious plan for a comprehensive overhaul of the power supply in Australia. Beyond Zero Emissions (BZE) has formulated solutions, projects and proposals which will see Australia utilising renewable energy, rapidly, providing demonstration installations can be set up. Mark says "There is a new alternative to coal, gas and nuclear for powering Australia which is affordable, reliable and available today. The BZE group has prepared a plan of action to transform our energy systems to these renewable technologies in just ten years. This is the "can do" campaign for a safer and more sustainable future for our country and our planet."



FIELD NATURALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF CANBERRA INC. GPO BOX 249
CANBERRA ACT 2601

FIELD NATTER

Notices from our Conservation Officer

A fabulous exhibition of forest images will be visiting Canberra from 5-28 August. Some of the images are by Richard Green whose work you may have seen at the National Library a few years ago. It'll be held at the ANU School of Arts. Please don't miss it! For the embattled south east forests it's bringing "*why on earth are you destroying this beauty?*" messages to those that should hear them but, of course it's also the INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS. So make a note in your diary and send messages to all who need a future where trees and ecosystems stay-put for climate change! See www.serca.org.au/naturalforests/index.html for details.

Have older Field Nats heard of the ACT Government's 12-month trial of a bulky waste collection service? The service opened on April 27th & is free for those holding a current Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card, an ACTION Gold Concession Card or a DVA Gold card. Tyny's Green Shed is contracted by the ACT Government to offer the public an alternative to depositing their unwanted items to landfill. Let's take part in this so that bulky waste collection becomes the norm for all of us with over-stocked sheds & garages....not just a trial! For details such as what items are accepted see www.tinysgreenshed.com.au or call 6162 5176.

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OUTING–FRIDAY 8th July 2:00pm Cryptogam Herbarium, ANBG

As a follow up to the interesting talk in May by Chris Cargill on bryophytes, the Field Nats will be having a look around the Cryptogam Herbarium at the ANBG. Chris is the curator of the Cryptogam Herbarium. We will meet at the Visitors' Information Centre at the ANBG at 2:00pm.

Please note that this is a daytime mid-week activity!

For further information or to register, please contact Tony Lawson on 6161 9430 or [tlawson\(at\)homemail.com.au](mailto:tlawson(at)homemail.com.au).

More information on the material in the Cryptogam Herbarium is available at www.anbg.gov.au/plantinfo. See the entries for ferns, bryophytes, lichens, the plant underworld and fungi.

The Kingdoms of Life - What happened to Plants? by Tony Lawson

I was brought up to believe that all living matter belongs to either the animal or the vegetable (plant) kingdom. But that view is now far too simplistic. Now five or six kingdoms are recognised, and there is an even larger group recognised - the domain. For the 5-kingdom classification, two domains are recognised - cells without a nucleus (prokaryotes) and cells with a nucleus (eukaryotes).

The prokaryotic domain comprises the kingdom Monera, which includes bacteria and cyanobacteria (the latter was once part of the Plant Kingdom). Around 10,000 species are recognised. (It also includes the archaeobacteria, but this is sometimes recognised as a sixth kingdom.)

The eukaryotic domain has four kingdoms:

Protista (250,000 species) - unicellular protozoans and algae

Fungi (100,000 species)

Plantae (250,000 species)

Animalia (1,000,000 species) - multi-cellular animals. (waynesword.palomar.edu/trfeb98.htm)

Unfortunately relying on the internet is not always a good idea - Chris Cargill tells me that currently there are around 1,250,000 species of fungi.

Thus what was once a large group of Plants has now been split across four kingdoms. Nevertheless Herbaria still collect the species that were originally included in the Plant kingdoms, such as algae, and fungi and lichens. Cryptogamia is a former primary division of plants that have no true flowers or seeds and that reproduce by spores, such as the ferns, mosses, fungi, and algae (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/cryptogam>). By comparison, Bryophyte is a traditional name used to refer to all embryophytes (land plants) that do not have true vascular tissue and are therefore called 'non-vascular plants'. Some bryophytes do have specialized tissues for the transport of water; however since these do not contain lignin, they are not considered to be true vascular tissue (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bryophyte).

The Australian National Herbarium was formed by the combination of the CSIRO and ANBG collections. It is too big to be held at one location. So the Herbarium at CSIRO holds all the flowering plants (angiosperms) within the broad group of seed producing plants, while the ANBG holds the cryptogams and the gymnosperms, which are seed producing, but non-flowering plants.



Stinkhorn fungus (P. Banks)

30th Year Anniversary Celebration 2011

The Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra Inc. is celebrating its 30th year of existence during July, 2011. All Field Naturalist Members are invited to attend the dinner. The FNAC Committee is strongly supportive of this important milestone in the Association's history.

The FNAC has done a great deal of good work in relation to the ACT's natural environment during its 30 year existence. In addition, hundreds of Canberra residents associated with the FNAC have been introduced to many of the wonders of the flora, fauna, physical structure, and topographic development of our natural environment. In addition, other topics of interest have enthused Members over the years.

A great variety of field trips have been provided to support presentations at meetings which have been designed to give Members "hands-on", practical experiences that have developed a realistic understanding of the "World" around us.

What more could we ask for in our association with the FNAC!



Taking in the view - a field trip to Kangaroo Valley, Jan. 2008 (D. Banks)

Details of the 30th Year Anniversary Celebration Dinner

Where?: **Thai Chiang Rai Restaurant**, 102 Emu Bank, Belconnen

When?: Friday, 29 July, 2011

Time?: Commencing at 7.00 pm sharp! (Suggest you arrive before that time!)

Cost?: \$28.90 per person for a Banquet style of food presentation

Why select this Restaurant?:

- The food is tasty and most people enjoy Thai food
- The cost is very reasonable and B.Y.O. is permitted / encouraged
- The service is good and the management is friendly and accommodating
- There is plenty of parking close-by
- Large groups of people can be handled with ease
- The location is pleasant, looking out over Lake Ginninderra
- It is centrally located at Emu Bank, Belconnen
- There is a bar adjacent to the dining area; or order drinks at the table

If you have special food requirements please let me know. It is possible to accommodate you. Joe, the Restaurant owner, wants to ensure everybody is happy with their meal!

If you haven't already booked to attend this 30th Year Anniversary Celebration Dinner please contact Bob Lehman in one of the following ways:

Email: helbo@westnet.com.au

Telephone: **6242 6853** (If no answer please leave a voice mail message. Thank you.)

Mail: Bob Lehman, Unit 8, 23 Temperley Street, Nicholls, ACT 2913

It is important that you indicate who is booking and for how many people you are booking. Please make contact quickly because I need to book the Restaurant giving numbers of people attending so the Thai Chiang Rai Restaurant can plan effectively for our needs.

Do you know any of the earlier FNAC Members who may like to attend this Celebratory Dinner? If you do, please let them know about it. They can make contact with me to book in too!

Bob Lehman: Treasurer FNAC

FNAC members out and about this winter

The Australian Pelican—*Pelicanus conspicillatus* by Rosemary von Behrens



I grew up with the little ditty, "The pelican, the pelican, It's bill can hold more than its belly-can!" What I had never realised, however, is just what its bill could do. On a recent camping trip to the coast around Eden NSW I visited the boat ramp at Pambula shortly before dusk. Three pelicans sat on a flat-bottomed oyster boat while one perched safely on a galvanised iron pipe high above the water. I admired its balance and the lovely ball-shape when viewed front central. A boat returned and slowly the pelicans stood, stretched, yawned and dropped into the water. I couldn't believe what I was seeing on one photo. What do you think? How did the bird achieve this? And why? Just want to stretch those creative juices - would that I could sculpt that pelican ball.

Looking for 'roos by Paula Banks

Recently, one of our younger members visited the Pinnacle Nature Reserve in Hawker, looking for 'roos. Although it was a beautifully sunny day, there was a strong, cold wind blowing and there wasn't a single kangaroo in sight. He felt a little disappointed as he sat down on a fallen log to shelter and eat morning tea. Just as he was finishing, a huge mob of kangaroos headed towards him. Tucked down in the grass the observer was not spotted and the 'roos passed right by the log where he sat. Unfortunately, this particular field naturalist still has a thing or two to learn about observing wildlife. Fortunately, Dad was at hand to catch the tiny terror before he disappeared after the mob. To a two-year old, everything that runs is obviously asking to be chased!



**Member contributions are always welcome.
Please send your story, article or photo to
fieldnaturalist@yahoo.com.au.**

ANBG Luchtime Talks

These excellent talks are held in the Theatrette at the Botanic Gardens from 12:30 to 1:30pm every Thursday from February to November. Forthcoming talks are:

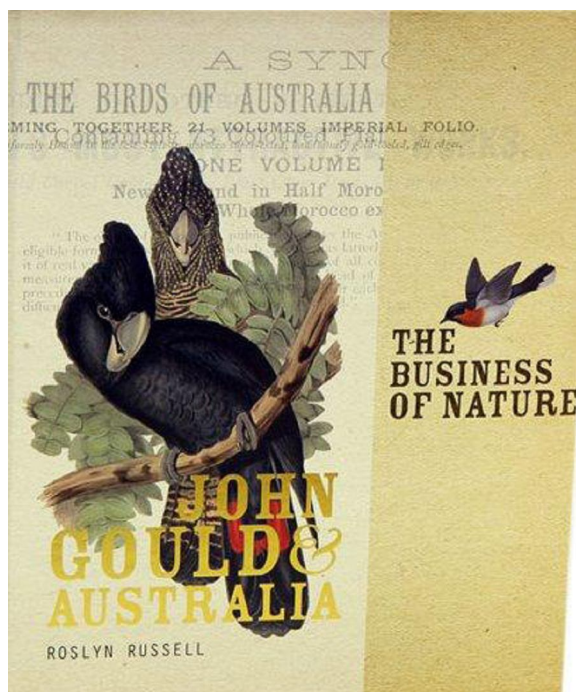
- Thurs 7 July : Wendy Rainbird "The World of Tidbinbilla" book discussed
- Thurs 14 July : Tony Fearnside "Westbourne Woods Revisited"
- Thurs 21 July : Tony Wood "Habitat Preferences of Orchids in the ACT"
- Thurs 28 July : Speaker TBA "Birds"
- Thurs 9 Aug : Warwick Wright "Is there a Doctor in the Garden"
- Thurs 11 Aug : Julia Cooke "My Little World" (The Bernard Fennessy Memorial Lecture)

For more information about these talks go to www.friendsanbg.org.au/calendar.html

BOOK REVIEW by Ian Fraser

The Business of Nature; John Gould and Australia

Roslyn Russell National Library of Australia. 224 pages. RRP \$50



John Gould is an integral part of the lore of Australian natural history. Born a gardener's son in Lyme Regis in 1804, he went on to raise the vocation of zoological entrepreneur to a new level, as taxidermist and publisher; he described over 320 species of Australian birds, 176 of which (by my count) are still valid - an extraordinary achievement; he famously identified Darwin's Galapagos finches (with revolutionary results); he introduced Budgies to England as cage birds; and he indirectly fostered later generations of Australian naturalists via the Gould League. The author, a historian, openly admits that the book provides only a brief sketch of Gould's life; if you don't know the story, this is a clear and concise summary, but if you have some familiarity with it you're unlikely to learn more here.

The real purpose of the book is to showcase the glorious paintings of Australian birds and mammals, produced by Gould's team under his direction, that are surely among the National Library's most significant treasures (at least if you share my biases!). To my mind this is a perfectly adequate excuse for a book, especially at the remarkably low prices that the library continues to charge for highest quality publications. The last 130-odd pages of the book are a portfolio of these paintings, superb reproductions of one per large format page. From an era when animal paintings often looked far too much as though painted from a dead animal by someone who'd never seen a live one (which they often were), Gould's productions remain a revelation, accurate, life-like and beautiful. He wasn't, and never claimed to be, the artist - his wife Elizabeth was crucial to the process until her tragically early death - but usually produced sketches to guide the real artists. There is not much bad to say about this book, though an editor should have eliminated the use of "animal" when the author means "mammal" (a long-standing *bête noir* of mine). I must mention however the curious (and unidentified) font, unpretentious for the most part (except in italics, when it becomes very swirly) but when "ct" are juxtaposed the "t" mysteriously sprouts a magnificently wispy coiffure; most peculiar. This in no way however detracts from a very handsome and welcome addition to the NLA stable.

Ian Fraser is a Canberra-based professional naturalist and writer. His periodic book reviews are emailed free on request, in order to help anyone interested in Australian natural history to keep up with the burgeoning literature. Previous issues available at <http://www.botanicalbookshop.com.au/reviews.asp>.

Who are the Field Naturalists?

The Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra (FNAC) was formed in 1981. Our aim is to foster interest in natural history by means of meetings and regular field outings. Meetings are usually held on the first Thursday of each month. Outings range from weekend rambles to long weekends away. Activities are advertised in our monthly newsletter. We emphasise informality and the enjoyment of nature. New members are always welcome. If you wish to join FNAC, please fill in the member application below and send it in with your subscription to the FNAC Treasurer at the address below:

President: Chris Bunn tel: 02 6241 2968 mobile 0417407351

Secretary: Tony Lawson, tel 02 6161 9430 fieldnaturalist@yahoo.com.au

Website: www.fieldnatscanberra.com

Newsletter Editor: Position vacant (see below)

All contributions welcome

Published and distributed by Bob Lehman.



Monthly meeting venue: Division of Botany and Zoology, Building 116, Daley Rd, Australian National University. Park (occasionally the adjacent building 44). Meetings start at 7:30 pm and are followed by refreshments.

IN SEARCH OF A NEWSLETTER EDITOR!

Margaret Kalms took over the position of Newsletter Editor from Chris Bunn in November 2009 and retired after editing the May newsletter this year. On behalf of all FNAC members, I'd like to thank Margaret for the huge effort that she put into this role. We should also thank Bob Lehman, our hard-working Treasurer, Webmaster, newsletter publisher and distributor for stepping in quickly to ensure that we had a June newsletter. I have agreed to temporarily fill the void left by Margaret but, with a two-year old and job to juggle, I hope that it won't be long before we find a new Newsletter Editor.

If you have a creative streak, a computer and a few hours to spare once a month please make yourself known to one of the FNAC committee members.

Paula Banks

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

Family name: First name:

If a family membership, please include the first names of other members of the family:

.....

Postal address:

Suburb: State: Postcode: Home phone:

Work phone: Email address:

Subscription enclosed: \$.....(Single/Family \$25) Donation: \$.....

How did you hear about FNAC? Please circle: FRIEND? OTHER? Please specify: