

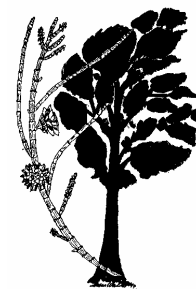
Australian Plants Society

Melton & Bacchus Marsh Inc (A0026204P)

ABN: 68 053 689 781

Website: <http://www.bulokebulletin.com>

APS Victoria website: <http://www.apsvic.org.au/>



BULOKE BULLETIN

NEWSLETTER No. 115
March - April 2011

edited by David & Barb Pye. Send contributions for next issue via dabpye@gmail.com by Saturday 14th May, 2011

Saturday 19th March - **QUARTERLY MEETING** hosted by **APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh**

At Staughton Vale Hall on Saturday 19th March.

If you are able to help on the day, and have not yet let Ann Goetz know, please phone her on 5367 8548.

Wednesday 23rd March -, **HIDDEN TREASURES: MOTHS OF THE GEELONG REGION**

talk by Marilyn Hewish

At Dunvegan, Willows Historic Park, in Melton (Melway 337 C9)

Doors open at 7.30pm, Program commences at 8pm

See more details of Marilyn's talk inside

AUCTION OF PURPLE LEAF SUGAR GUM

Peter Yates, a previous group secretary, has a purple leaf Eucalyptus cladocalyx in a pot. Having found this spectacular plant unsuited to the Woodend climate, he has donated it to the group, expecting it to do well in the Melton - Bacchus Marsh climate. It will be auctioned at the March meeting.

Saturday 16th April - **GARDEN VISITS**

Gardens of Jenny & Rob Morris at Darley, and Ann & Martin Goetz at Coimadai

Meet at Darley Park at 10.00am,

At 10.30 am, proceed to Morris garden at 34 Wellington Street, Darley (MEL 333 J1)

At 11.30 am, proceed to Goetz garden at 2223 Gisborne Road Coimadai (Turn off the Gisborne Road at the cluster of colourful letterboxes. A short road leads to the Goetz garden) **BRING A PICNIC LUNCH.**

Wednesday April 27th - **GOODENIACEAE** *talk by David Lightfoot*

At Dunvegan, Willows Historic Park, in Melton (Melway 337 C9)

Doors open at 7.30pm, Program commences at 8pm

The Goodeniaceae is a family of mostly small growing plants with showy flowers. They include dampiera's, lechenaultias, scaevolias and goodenias. Many of these species provide a showy display in spring and summer. See more inside

COMING EVENTS

Sat 21 st May	Annual Plant Sale, Uniting Church, Bacchus Marsh
Wed 25 th May	A Walk in the Victorian Alps - panoramic presentation by Michael Marmach - joint meeting with Melton Garden Club, at the DJ Cunninham Cente, Melton South
Wed June	Bees Honey & Native flora – talk by Jim Sansom

HIDDEN TREASURES: Moths of the Geelong Region *details of talk by Marilyn Hewish*

Moths get bad press, derided as "small and brown" with destructive caterpillars that eat clothes and garden plants. But moths have their own place in the ecology of the natural world and some of the Victorian ones are astonishingly large and colourful.

Moth study is at about the same stage as bird study in the late 1800s. There are few moth addicts and our knowledge is limited and patchy. In my recent studies west of Port Phillip Bay, I've discovered several new species for the state. The Long Forest near Bacchus Marsh is mallee remnant with mallee birds, and I've found it also has moths that have been known up to now only from north-western Victoria. The Otways have been particularly productive, with several species known only from Tasmania turning up there.

In the talk, I'll show some of our most gorgeous and bizarre local moths - the hidden treasures in the night - and describe how my work fits into exciting new developments in the study of Victorian moths.

OUR PLANT SALE FOR 2011

Our annual plant sale will be held on 21st May, 2011: 9am to 1pm at the Uniting Church car park, Bacchus Marsh

Several hundred Hakeas have been potted up for the sale and are being grown on by members.

Species include:

adnata, bucculenta, bucculenta hybrid, Burrendong Beauty seedlings, cinerea, constablei, dactyloides, francisiana, laurina, laurina narrow, macreana, minima, multilineata, neurophylla, obtuse, petiolaris, prostrata (shrub form), rugosa, scoparia, sericea, strumosa burgundy, verrucosa

GOODENIACEAE

Plants similar to those in the following photos will be featured in David Lightfoot's talk.



EUCALYPTUS ARBORETUM

- report on progress by David Pye

The project continues to move ahead. The area has been sprayed to reduce weeds, and has since been ripped or cultivated to break up the soil and permit water to penetrate... There are good moisture levels in the soil and conditions permit planting. However, it is necessary to prepare the primary paths first, since this will involve removal of soil which will be added to the beds. It is intended that this work be completed by early May to permit commencement of planting at that time.



Trees are being grown and some are large enough now. These will be hardened off before planting.



We are awaiting the establishment of a Work for the Dole team and the appointment of a team leader.

We have submitted a Vision for Werribee Plains grant application for \$132,000. This requires an equivalent co-contribution from FMBG and partners. This will be met by the Work for the Dole team, FMBG volunteer hours, MSC contributions, Western Water, APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh, and other contributions.

REPTILES VS AMPHIBIANS

report by Cathy Powers on Ade Foster's talk to the February meeting

Actually Ade's presentation was mostly on the frogs of the Brisbane Ranges but there was heaps of other information worth relating.

Reptiles are the lizards, snakes, crocodiles and turtles.



- Reptiles have scales; hard impervious skin which is shed annually to allow them to grow.
- Most reptiles have many, very sharp teeth.
- Reptiles usually have a pointed tongue, sometimes forked as with snakes and goannas, which is hinged at the back (like ours) laying forward in the mouth.
- Sunlight is used by reptiles for heat control.
- Reptiles lay eggs or give live birth and the young are images of the adults.



Amphibians are newts, salamanders, caecilians, toads and frogs. (only frogs are native to Australia)



- Amphibians have a soft impermeable skin which is shed every 7 – 10 days and then they eat it for the protein.
- Amphibians have few if any teeth.
- Amphibians' tongues are rounded, sticky and hinged at the front so it lays backwards in the mouth. It is not used to swallow food and in the case of frogs – they use the downward pressure of their eyes to push food down their throat.
- Sunlight, in most cases, is avoided by amphibians because it dries their skin. An example of an exception to this is the Growling Grass frog which will bask in the sun but also pop back into the water to keep their skin wet.
- Amphibians have a three stage cycle – lay eggs which hatch into larvae (tadpoles) and

then mature into adults. All frogs need water to breed.

Habitat is remarkably similar for both. There are no marine amphibians, only reptiles are found in marine habitats.

Newts are lizard-like in shape and are usually under 6 in. (15 cm) long including the slender tail. In Australia, newts were made illegal some years ago. Axolotls or Mexican walking fish are readily available, these can change into salamanders sometimes and are sold as pets.

The caecilians (pronounced /siːsiliən/) completely lack limbs, making the smaller species resemble worms while the larger species with lengths up to 1.5m resemble snakes. They mostly live hidden in the ground, which makes them one of the least known orders of amphibians.

There is only one toad in Australia and it is the invasive amphibian known as the Cane Toad. It was introduced in 1935 in an unsuccessful attempt to control cane beetles.



From Queensland, the toads have spread west into the Northern Territory and south into New South Wales becoming a major threat to native animals.

Amphibians of Australia are limited to frogs. There are about 230 of the total world listed (5,280) species of frog native to Australia with 93% endemic. Compared to other continents, species diversity is low and this may be related to the Australian continent climate. There are 36 listed species of frogs in Victoria and information about these frogs (including calls) can be found on the internet at the following URL <http://frogs.org.au/frogs/of/Victoria/>

Females do not call – only the males and that is specifically for attracting a mate (or overcalling another male frog of their species).

Our area:

The Brisbane Ranges has some great habitat for frogs including the swamp, seasonal damp areas such as creeks and streams, damp gullies and also man-made water storage areas such as fire dams.

Most commonly heard:

Crinia signifera - Eastern Common Froglet
Also: Clicking Froglet, Common Eastern Froglet, Common Froglet, Day Frog, Varied Froglet



A small ground dwelling frog, the Common Froglet is one of Eastern Australia's most common and widespread species. Its cricket-like chirping can be heard all day and all year round.

Adults are most common in wet and dry forests, woodlands, floodplains, open and disturbed areas, and alpine grasslands. Within these habitats they shelter under logs and other debris, usually in moist depressions or near water. It is not uncommon to find dozens of individuals under one log or rock. **Eggs** and **tadpoles** are aquatic and can be found in ponds, dams, swamps, flooded grassland, ditches and hollows.

Males call from among vegetation at the waters edge or floating in open water supported by vegetation. The call is a series of three to five pulsed calls, with a chirping quality, rapidly repeated in a long series - "crick crick crick crick crick".

Adults have a granular belly which is white or muddy white, heavily mottled with black or dark brown. The patterning on the back is variable but three patterns (morphs) are recognised: [1] ridged (longitudinal ridges along back); [2] lyrate (boomerang shaped ridges over the shoulder and on the back); and [3] smooth (back smooth, unpatterned, or with small warts).

Probably the most often seen:

Limnodynastes tasmaniensis - Spotted Marsh Frog
Also: Spotted Frog, Spotted Grass Frog



One of the most common frogs within its range. The frog is usually found in association with

water, and in dry periods shelters in cracks in the ground, usually under large rocks.

Adults are most often associated with wet areas, flood plains, and semi-permanent water in habitats ranging from open forests and woodlands through shrublands and grasslands and including open and disturbed areas. Often common on farms and in farms dams. **Eggs** and **tadpoles** can both be found in still water in dams, streamside ponds, lakes, swamps, and flooded grasslands.

Males call while floating in water, most often concealed in floating vegetation. There are two call races for this species. The northern call race has a short staccato call of three or four distinct notes repeated in long series - "kuk-kuk-kuk". In our area it is a single 'kuk'.

Adults usually have large regularly-shaped olive green blotches on the back and sometimes have a yellow, red, or orange mid-dorsal stripe.

Limnodynastes dumerili - Eastern Banjo Frog
Also: Eastern Pobblebonk, Four-bob Frog



This common and widespread burrowing frog may often be found in large numbers at night, particularly after rain. They voracious feeders and eat just about anything that moves including other frogs.

Adults frequent all habitats with the exception of alpine areas, rainforest, and extremely arid zones. **Eggs** and **tadpoles** inhabit still water in swamps, streams, dams, and lakes.

Males usually call concealed in floating vegetation or less commonly from land at the water's edge. The call is a short musical, explosive note producing a resonant "bonk". The call is usually repeated every few seconds. Some individuals from eastern populations can produce a rapid series of "bonk bonk bonk bonk" lasting about one second.

Adults have a prominent tibial gland, a fleshy metatarsal tubercle and a smooth white or mottled belly.

Litoria ewingi - Southern Brown Tree Frog
Also: Brown Tree Frog, Ewing's Tree Frog, Whistling Tree Frog



A widespread and common species found in great numbers in flooded grassland or marshes. An agile climber and jumper. Like most of our small tree frogs, this species is a voracious insectivore capable of leaping to catch a fly in mid-flight!

Adults can be found in all habitat types, and are even common in gardens in suburban areas. They frequent wet and flooded areas for breeding but can often be found calling long distances from water. **Eggs and tadpoles** can be found in still water in ponds, dams, lakes, streamside ponds and flooded roadside ditches

Males usually call from the ground or in low vegetation, at the water's edge or in water, floating amongst the vegetation. The call is a series of rapid harsh, whirring pulsing notes repeated 5-15 times - "creeeeeeee creee creee cree cree cree". The first note is usually the longest.

The **adults** have pale fawn, cream, orange, or light brown sides. Breeding males have a light brown vocal sac.

Litoria reniformis - Growling Grass Frog
Also: Green and Golden Frog, Southern Bell Frog, Warty Swamp Frog



A widespread but only locally common frog, populations of which may be in decline. This frog also preys on other frogs and is active by day.

Adults are usually found close to or in water or very wet areas in woodlands, shrublands, and

open and disturbed areas. **Eggs and tadpoles** can be found in permanent lakes, swamps, dams, and lagoons with still water.

Males usually call while floating in open water. The call is a growl of about one second duration - "crawark-crawark-crok-crok".

Adults are bright emerald to dull olive green with brown and/or gold blotches on a warty back. The tympanum (ear) is distinct, as is the dorso-lateral fold.

Threats:

Habitat loss - individual populations have decreased in numbers mainly because of habitat loss. Some have a short life-span of about 2 years while others can live 7-8 years. If they have nowhere to breed, even the long-lived species can have decreased numbers when there is a 10 year drought.

Pollution – mainly when it impacts on their habitat although some species are not particular regarding the quality of water for breeding.

Chytrid *fungus* – it affects the skin of frogs but it is unknown how it actually kills to frog.

Predators – snakes, birds, even foxes.

Are we seeing fewer frogs: Yes but that is mostly due to the lack of exposure because as children, we looked for things like frogs – as adults we don't take the time to enjoy them.

Thank you Ade. It was a very informative presentation, including the calls, and we all enjoyed your commentary (especially some of your secrets).



APS Melton & Bacchus Marsh Committee

President	Martin Grannas	5426 4748
Vice President	Barb Pye	5428 9369
Secretary	Gerry Monaghan	5367 0857, aps@hotmail.net.au
Treasurer	Cathy Powers	5369 4302, aps@hotmail.net.au
Committee	Joan Carr, David Pye, John Flanagan, Lucille McCarthy	