

OBJECT: To foster an interest in nature

August 2022

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FIELD NATURALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF CANBERRA INC. GPO BOX 708  
JAMISON CENTRE ACT 2614

# FIELD NATURALIST

## August 2022 newsletter No monthly meetings until further notice



Confrontation between two Grey Butcherbirds behind Higgins Shops: and the victor

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## Vale Don Woods

**Donald Holder Wood**  
**20 July 1929 – 10 July 2022**

For many local Field Natters Betty and Don's books were the first\* really useful field guides for those beginning their explorations into the region's flora. Don's photos being arranged according to flower colour made identification easier than information presented in greater botanical detail. Don's photos remain the clearest representations of many species found locally and invasive species were included; a real boon to those new to the histories of Australia's plant families. Betty and Don were long-time FNAC members. Vale Don.

Rosemary Blemings included this paragraph about the FIELD GUIDES as one of nine citations when Betty and Don were nominated for Australian Native Plants Society Life Membership in 2016.

Don and Betty self-published a series of Field Guides illustrating

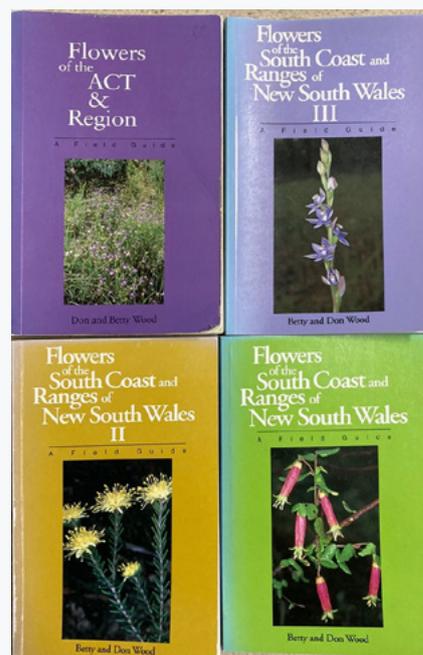
\* *Our Patch: Field Guide to the Flora of the Australian Capital Region*, as photographed in the Aranda Bushland was published by Friends of Aranda Bushlands in 1997 focusing on native species.

the region's flora for easy identification:

- *Flowers of the South Coast and Ranges of New South Wales: A Field Guide*
- *Wood's Books*, Weetangera, 1998
- *Flowers of the South Coast and Ranges of New South Wales II: A Field Guide* Wood's Books, Weetangera, 1999
- *Flowers of the South Coast and Ranges of New South Wales III: A Field Guide*.
- *Wood's Books*, Weetangera, 2000
- *Flowers of the ACT & Region: A Field Guide*. Wood's Books, Weetangera, 2005.

With their coverage of Canberra's immediate region, the books encouraged the logic of regional ecology and habitats rather than perpetuating the artificial construct of human and political boundaries.

By including species that are likely to be found as people explore or journey near and beyond the ACT and arranging them by flower colour, the books reached out to everyone's



curiosity. Their eminent portability still matches APPs on electronic devices. In the digital age the Guides' succinct facts, below each photograph - common name, botanical name, family, flowering period, height and the image's scale - are ideal for comparison, confirmation and further research.

After retirement Don developed a passion for photographing wildflowers. The quality of his work contributes to the success of the books.

## Platypus survey

Platypus numbers are declining, and sadly this unique creature is now at risk of extinction.

This September, we're asking people like you to head down to your local creek or river, find a quiet place on the bank, try to spot a platypus and record what you see.

It's part of the platy-project - a citizen-science project by ACF and the University of New South

Wales that aims to fill the gaps in our understanding of where this elusive animal lives, so that we can better protect it.

Join the online launch of the platy-project September month of action, to kick off a big month of searching for, and celebrating, the platypus. On the night you will:

You might be surprised by the places the elusive platypus calls home. In urban rivers, suburban

creeks, farm dams, and local reservoirs - they're probably closer than you think.

If you want to get involved check out the Australian Conservation Foundation [web site](https://www.acf.org.au/platy-project?utm_campaign=2207_platyprojectnew&utm_medium=email&utm_source=auscon) (https://www.acf.org.au/platy-project?utm\_campaign=2207\_platyprojectnew&utm\_medium=email&utm\_source=auscon) for further information on webinars and on how to report findings.

## Roper's Story - an orphaned flying fox in Canberra - By Clare Wynter

Roper was found orphaned in early November last year in Commonwealth Park. He was approximately 3 weeks in age. He had large holes in his wing membranes, possibly after dropping off his mother as she was flying out to forage for the night. Roper's mother did not return. As an orphaned flying fox, Roper had to be fed milk 5 times a day at first. He was raised by Denise who patiently taught him to accept a bottle, treated his wing injuries and gave him the emotional nurturing care that he needed. Clare was also able to support Roper's recovery. In late January after commencing a fruit diet and being weaned he was driven to Nowra to the South Coast Wildlife rescue flying-fox creche where he joined another 26 young flying-foxes. Here he spent a further 4 months socialising and learning to fly before being successfully released into the wild with some of his peers.

Did you know:

Flying-foxes feed on native blossoms and a wide variety of fruit, both native and introduced.

Mother grey-headed flying-foxes carry their pup on their chest as they fly out to forage for food each night until they are too heavy (approx 3-4weeks). From this time the pups are able to thermoregulate

their own bodies and are left in the camp at night (trees in Commonwealth Park in this case) whilst mum goes out to forage. Before dawn the mothers fly back to the camp, find their pup and feed them. The pups will spend the day sleeping and feeding with mum until they grow a bit older and then they'll start to explore away from their mother for part of the day. At approximately 12 weeks they are beginning to fly, however they continue to stay with their mother and are not weaned until 4-6 months.

Orphans in care are weaned much earlier, around 11 weeks when they are beginning to fly and become more independent. A protein powder is added to the fruit they eat as a substitute for the milk they no longer receive.

Orphaned pups raised in Canberra are usually sent to the creche at Nowra so that they can be introduced into a larger group of similar aged juveniles. Here they learn to socialise and fly, before being released into the local flying-fox camp. Taking our juveniles to the coastal creche, enables them to start flying and then being released in a warmer coastal climate. If they were kept in Canberra they may not be ready for release and strong enough to fly the long distance to warmer areas, before the winter cold arrives.

## Activities

### 9:00 am, 9 August: The Pinnacle Nature Reserve, Hawker

Meet at the end of Dungowan Street for a walk through the reserve. Hopefully we will see some birds and the wattle may be in flower. Afterwards we could go to Rock Salt at the Hawker shops for coffee. Please contact Alison Milton if you are intending to come so that we have an idea of numbers. Email: [apm56@optusnet.com.au](mailto:apm56@optusnet.com.au) or phone 6254 0578.

Month	Excursion	Leader
9 August	The Pinnacle Nature Reserve, Hawker	Alison Milton
13 September	Suggestions please?	TBA
4 October	Jo Walker's property at Wamboin	Jo Walker
8 November	Suggestions?	Alison Milton
December	Suggestions?	
7 December	Xmas party – location suggestions?	

A recce of previously proposed Fetherstone Gardens and Naramag River Reserve indicated that there is not much of interest at either location at the moment. Other suggestions are welcome.

## Membership fees

A reminder that membership fees are now due. Please see the form on the back page for details on fees and payment options. As we are gradually getting back to being active again, please continue to support FNAC and invite friends to join us.

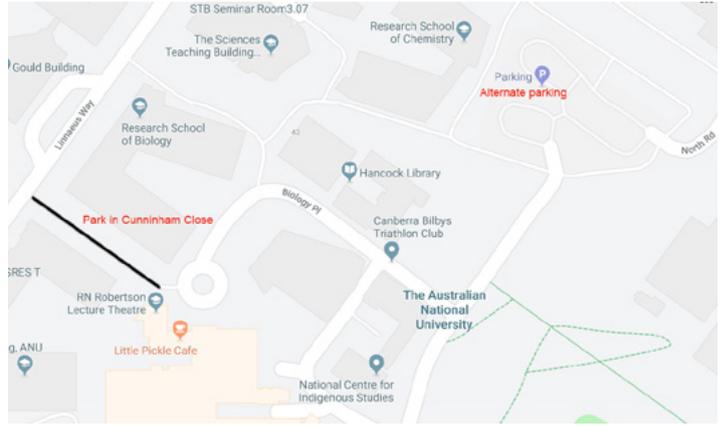


Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra Inc.

### 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:** Rosemary Blemings I  
[president@fieldnatsact.com](mailto:president@fieldnatsact.com)
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- Newsletter Editor:** [editor@fieldnatsact.com](mailto:editor@fieldnatsact.com)



**Monthly meeting venue:** Jan Anderson Seminar Room, R. N. Robertson Building, Biology Place, Australian National University

**Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra**  
**GPO Box 708**  
**Jamison Centre ACT 2614**



### Membership application or renewal

Surname: ..... 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: .....

How did you hear about FNAC? Please circle: Friend

Other Please specify: .....

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

*Subscription renewals are due on 1 July each year*

**Pay by post** (include completed form)

Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra  
GPO Box 708  
Jamison Centre ACT 2614

**Bank transfer** (renewals only: form not needed)

Account name: Field Nats  
BSB: 325 185  
Account number: 03545251  
Reference: **Please include your name**