

OBJECT: To foster an interest in nature

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

# FIELD NATTER

## December 2022 newsletter No evening meetings until further notice



*Female Leaden Flycatcher, The Pinnacle Hawker*



*The start of a Weebill nest (they are just starting building), The Pinnacle Hawker*

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## New publication: Native bees of the ACT and NSW South Coast

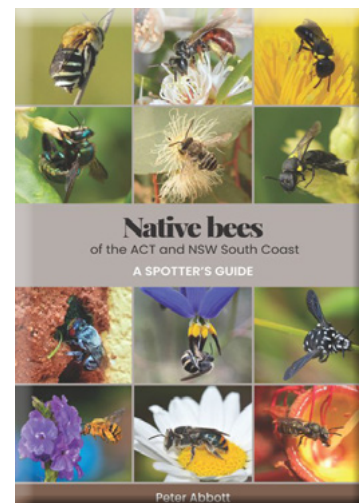
Peter Abbott has produced a wonderful spotter's guide book for local native bees. This keenly anticipated book will introduce you to the gentle art of spotting and recognising our local bee species. For the more curious, it will help you to identify the major bee groups and many individual species using simple visual clues. It is written in non-technical language to encourage everybody to become native bee spotters and includes many wonderful photos of our local bee species. The aim of the book is for everybody

to become native bee spotters and advocates for native bee conservation.

The book was launched at the Australian National Botanic Gardens on 12 November and is available from the garden's bookshop (\$40) or from <https://nativebeesact.net/> (\$30 + \$6 postage).

I bought my copy at the launch and would encourage you to take a look at this wonderful new book.

**Alison Milton**



## Dimples from 'Flora' as mine goes to seed

AAP | 23 October 2022

'Flora' is restoring the windswept plains dug up by a mineral sands company.



The bespoke seeding machine (Flora Restorer, to use its full name) has in fact won Iluka Resources Western Australia's Golden Gecko award for environmental excellence at its remote Eneabba mine site.

With mineral sands used in everyday products from toothpaste and sunscreen to paint, paper, plastics and ceramics, it's the kind of recognition Iluka values.

Increasingly, investors and consumers expect companies to know where a product's ingredients come from and for mining operations to leave a lighter footprint.

The climate at Eneabba, three hours drive north of Perth, is harsh with summer temperatures as high as 48 degrees. Sandy soil and would-be seedlings are blown away by constantly gusting winds of up to 40 km/h. Rain is scarce. Less than 30 mm fell there in total across December, January and February. Yet Iluka and Flora have managed to restore 18 square kilometres of Kwongan vegetation after mining.

The word 'Kwongan' comes from the Noongar word for sand plain and refers to a globally significant and threatened ecosystem. Adapted to survive heat and fires, the low-lying vegetation once covered a third of south-western Australia, while half the species concerned are found nowhere else on Earth.

Flora combines last-century technologies for 21st century repairs. It uses rollers and 'dimpling' techniques from the dust bowl of the United States' Mid West to prepare the ground, spread fertiliser and drop seeds. 'Then it rolls a land imprinter over it, creating a dimpled surface before it sprays an artificial soil crust of bitumen emulsion to hold those seeds in place until it rains,' Iluka principal rehabilitation scientist Mark Dobrowolski said.

It smells awful but stabilises land that would otherwise erode. The water holds on that surface, the seedlings pop through and the plants can establish themselves.

Flora could work on any mine site or restoration project with similar conditions: sandy soil and windy, erosive climate. 'There is just one Flora Restorer, for now'.

Since Flora Restorer came into operation, Iluka has been able to nearly triple the rate of germination while using the same amount of seed.

Awarding the Gecko, WA Mines Minister Bill Johnston said the machine had significantly improved the diversity and growth of revegetation in an area with challenging conditions.

He said he hoped recognition of the innovation would encourage other companies to find new ways of working with communities and the environment.

## Welcome visitors

I had a great discovery this afternoon. I have a trio of tawny frogmouths roosting in my ironbark tree out the front.

I have heard funny cheeping noises in the trees after dark for several weeks now, so last night took a torch to investigate. There was a large, fully fledged chick but I couldn't determine what sort so I looked on Canberra Nature Map. There are many references to tawny frogmouths in Kambah so this afternoon I made a determined effort to find them - and I did. They are roosting on my ironbark tree in the front near the drive. Hope they decide to stay.

**Deidre Shaw**



## Botanic Gardens annex walk

On Monday 24 October, preceding the AGM at the ANBG, Janet and I led a walk along the "Bushland Nature Walk" on Black Mountain.



*Dilwynia*



*Paper wasp nest*

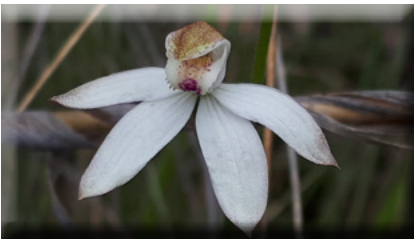


*Stypandra*

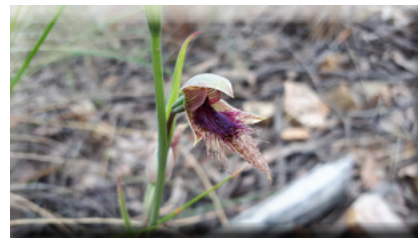


*Cassinia understorey*

We began at the ANBG and walked to the lookout over Lake Burley Griffin, then back again along the same route.



*Caladenia orchid*



*Bearded orchid*

There were many spring flowers to delight us, and bar a few spots, the rain held off. The track wasn't even slippery, despite a lot of recent rain.

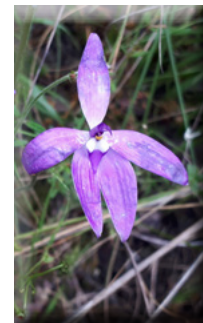
**John Stein**



*Indigofera*



*Diuris Tiger orchid*



*Waxlip orchid Glossodia*

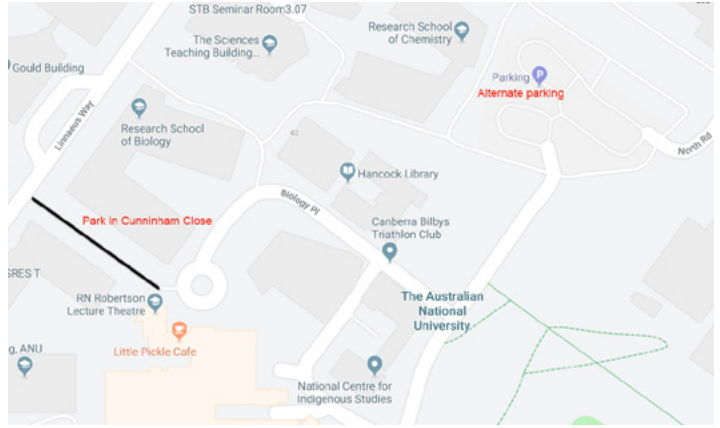


Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra Inc.

### 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  
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**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**