

OBJECT: To foster an interest in nature

July 2013
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MEETING—THURSDAY
7:30 pm Australian National University
Gould Seminar Room, Building 116, Daley Road, ANU, ACT
details back page

Clouding the Vision

a talk and slide discussion by Dierk von Behrens and Rachel Marks.

Rachel is a trained environmental scientist. She is a member of the Cloud Appreciation Society and works for the Molonglo Catchment Group. Rachel monitored the ACT skies over a period of 270 days taking 170 photos. She will present and discuss a selection of her photos.

Dierk von Behrens is an environmental activist. He will present an overview of clouds as distinct from fog, mist, haze and smog; their classification (formation, height and genus) and supplementary features and special clouds



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GPO BOX 249
CANBERRA ACT 2601

FIELD NATURALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF CANBERRA INC.

FIELD NATTER

Field Naturalists' Association prize 2012

Each year the Field Naturalists award a prize to an ANU student who has “achieved consistently at the highest level across all relevant courses”. In our case this means studies related to botany, zoology, ecology and evolution in what used to be the BOZO faculty. (Botany & Zoology). The prize takes the form of a \$250 voucher from the Co-op Bookshop and we have invited this year’s recipient Borbala Cser to join us at a meeting to receive her prize in person. We hope Borbala will also tell us about her special interests and aims for her scientific future.

The prize is also a way to show Field Nats’ appreciation for decades of inclusion in the life of BOZO and for their excellent seminar-room facilities.

Rosemary Blemings

Understanding disease to protect an Aussie icon

Crucial knowledge on how koalas adapt to heat, cope with habitat loss and transmit common diseases will be the focus of five research projects.

The Queensland Government has announced that the University of Queensland (UQ) will receive the lion’s share of \$3.2 million in funding.

UQ wildlife biologist, Steve Johnston, welcomed the support of \$2.6 million in funding to the university’s koala research.

“The projects will deliver meaningful results to better inform koala conservation efforts.”

One research project will investigate the effects of chlamydia in male koalas. *“While there has been a lot of work investigating the pathology of chlamydia in female koalas, studies on the incidence and pathology of the organism in male koalas has up to this point been very limited. Preliminary investigations have indicated that chlamydia can cause sterility in some males, but the*

extent to which this occurs and under what conditions remains to be determined.”

Building upon previous UQ research, the team will learn how the organism is transmitted and what effect chlamydia might have upon the koala sperm cell, particularly sperm DNA.

Dr Johnston has indicated their team will also attempt to establish ‘clean-up’ technologies to screen and remove the disease from semen of infected males. *“The sperm then has the potential to be used in artificial insemination programs to recover genetics from animals that might otherwise be lost to the general koala population,”* Dr Johnston said.

Dr Bill Ellis, Head of the Koala Ecology Group and Research Fellow at UQ’s Sustainable Minerals Institute, will also play a key role in the research projects investigating disease transmission and how koalas adapt to extreme climatic conditions. *“We need to know what elements of their environment are essential to survival during heat waves, so we can protect, or even augment these features in developing landscapes,”* Dr Ellis said.

“Understanding how koalas modify their behaviour and how they use their environment when it becomes very hot and dry will be fundamental to this knowledge.”

Dr Ellis is also eager to discover why all populations of koalas infected with chlamydia are not in decline as a result.

“This will help us mitigate the impacts of the disease where it is causing population declines and also provide some basic knowledge of how social behaviour influences pathogen transmission in this species.”



A moment of fame

Have you had a great experience or a subject of personal interest?? Been moved to write about it, either in prose or verse? Felt the urge to see your name in print? Or even just taken some great photo shots that you would like to share.

Everyone is due their 15 minutes of fame. Why not claim yours?

Field Natter welcomes contributions. Alternatively, send in a photo or two with a short paragraph about it/them.

The closing date for each issue is the last Monday of every month. Handwritten and posted material is acceptable, but email is preferred. We also welcome photographs, preferably as separately scanned items or digital images. We can scan original photographs. Email contributions to alison.milton@health.gov.au or phone 6289 2717 to discuss

Post: 20 O'Sullivan Street, HIGGINS, ACT 2615

Alison Milton, Editor

Bird monitoring report release

The ANU has just released its report on its (extended) Campus Bird Monitoring exercise.

The report is available from the ANU's web site at:

http://sustainability.anu.edu.au/__documents/landscape-and-biodiversity/anugreen_bird_monitoring_report.pdf

Activities

Sunday 7th July, The National Arboretum 2 pm. Leader Tony Lawson

Tony is a Guide at the Arboretum, Secretary of STEP [Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park] and is on the Council of the Friends of the National Arboretum Canberra. Meet at the entrance to the Visitor's (Village) Centre. **Parking costs:** \$2.00 per hour at the Centre, all funds to be used for the Arboretum.

Saturday 12 October 2013: 9.30 am sharp to 12 noon (or later) Black Mountain Wildflower Ramble

Belconnen Way entry, just before Caswell Drive turnoff (look for the balloons).

Join wildflower lovers for the Burbidge/Chippendale tradition of celebrating the spring flowering with the 42nd annual Black Mountain wildflower ramble. Discover the surprising diversity of tiny orchids, bush peas, wattles and billy buttons with experienced guides. Following the tradition set by Nancy and George, this will be a social occasion with a morning tea break (BYO), relatively easy bush tracks and good company. It will be sponsored by Friends of Black Mountain, NPA, U3A, ANPS, ANBG Friends and Field Nats. Who knows what spring will bring this year in the 'jewel of the crown of Canberra Nature Park'. It's always fascinating to see how diversity and abundance differ. Our Patch field guide will be on sale for \$15 and some handouts provided. All welcome. Bring your friends especially those who are new to plant identification. BYO morning tea, hat, sunblock, water and stout shoes. **Please book:** friendsofblackmountain@gmail.com so we have enough guides. **Contact:** Jean Geue on 6251-1601.

Monthly meetings

Month	Speaker	Topic
4 July	Dierk von Behrens and Rachel Marks	Clouding the Vision
1 August	Ric Longmore	Dangerous snakes of Australia
5 September	AGM, members' night	Member's choice
3 October	Trish McDonald	Macquarie Island, rabbit, rat, mouse control during her time as station manager for the Australian Antarctic Division
7 November	Under construction	
5 December	Christmas party	



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.

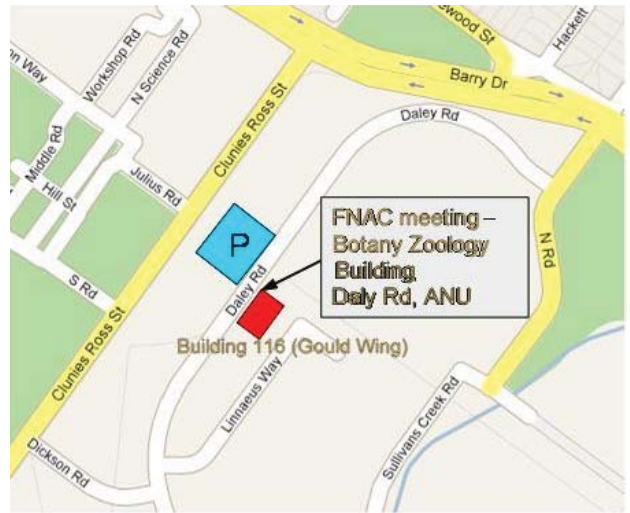
President: Rosemary von Behrens ph: 6254 1763

Email: fieldnaturalist@yahoo.com.au

Website: under construction

All newsletter contributions welcome.

Editor



Monthly meeting venue: Division of Botany and Zoology, Building 116, Daley Rd, Australian National University. Park (the Xmas meeting is at the adjacent building 44 and will start at the earlier time of 6:30 pm)

**Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra
GPO Box 249
Canberra ACT 2601**



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: