

OBJECT: To foster an interest in nature

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GPO BOX 249
CANBERRA ACT 2601

FIELD NATURALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF CANBERRA INC.

FIELD NATURALIST

MEETING—THURSDAY 2 June
7:30 pm Australian National University
Gould Seminar Room, Building 116, Daley Road, ANU, ACT
details back page

Old fella trees - The missing factor? Conservation of mature and old growth trees

Speaker: Brandon Galpin

Brandon Galpin is a ranger with the Murrumbidgee, ACT Parks and Conservation Service. Old fella' trees is a look into the dynamics of the largely missing contingent of old growth trees on the landscape and how our National Parks systems can offer long term restoration to forest ecology.



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Bush capital: the natural history of the ACT... a great way to learn

We have until June to visit the exhibition at Canberra Museum and Gallery (CMAG).

I've been twice so far and still haven't done each of the exhibits justice.

The way Ian Fraser has woven facts, anecdotes, fun and names' origins into the well-phrased captions he's created is very clever. On several occasions he's also managed to send important messages home without being too bullish or critical.

I made a note of some of the new entries into my memory bank!

In the introduction to the Wetlands section "so many living things rely on us recognising their needs as well as our own."

Casuarinas "They don't like competition and actively suppress growth within the groves by chemicals either from their roots or in fallen branch-lets."

Dragonflies "270 million years ago dragonflies with 70 cm wingspans terrorised the skies... some 50 dragonfly and damselfly species can be found in the ACT, around any water body."

"Water rats hunt mussels, which they will leave out in the sun until the shell opens."

Eastern Great Egret "...millions slaughtered world wide for fashionable hat ornaments."

Straw-Necked Ibis "Baby ibis are hatched with short straight bills to facilitate feeding by their parents."

Grebes "...have heavy skeletons and even swallow small pebbles as ballast... to stay under water."

White-Throated Tree-Creeper "Like other local species the White Throated Tree-Creeper needs hollows in mature trees to nest".

Jumping spider "They are common in gardens and provide both enjoyment and good pest control."

Daddy longlegs "Just about any healthy house has a Daddy longlegs or two, busily engaged in reducing the numbers of less welcome tenants such as silverfish, flies, mosquitoes, White-tailed and Red-backed Spiders."

Australian raven "...able to count to some extent and hide food for later use – and unerringly recall where they put it."

Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoos "Their enormous bill can crush iron-hard Banksia cones... To breed they need deep hollows in old forest trees that must be around 200 years old."

Large forest bat "...but moths have learnt to dive away from their pings, or even to jam them with their own sonar." (I'd never considered until recently that moths would make noises. This came as confirmation.)

I also recently went specifically to the Questacon Spiders Exhibit. This was at Rachael's insistence. She's now 16 and grew up with Lucy trying not to pass on her arachnophobia. Lucy's done well because Rachael said "You've got to see it Grandma". She was right. We have until October for this and then it moves, I think, to Sydney. We may turn more people from arachnophobia through this great show and perhaps even show young people that the bush is as full of colour, excitement, drama, wonder, awe, surprises and discoveries as any screen-based show.

Rosemary Blemings

The scientist in the garden

37th Annual National Conference, Canberra

Canberra Rex Hotel

150 Northbourne Avenue, Braddon

14–16 October 2016

The conference will celebrate the historic role of the scientist in helping Australian gardens adapt to and appreciate our unique growing conditions and wonderful flora.

Optional Monday bus tour viewing significant rural property gardens.

Register online at: trybooking.com

Email: info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au

Website: gardenhistorysociety.org.au

Activities

TBC:

Bush Capital Exhibition: Canberra Museum and Arts Centre.

Month	Speaker	Topic
2 June	Brandon Galpin	Old fella trees
7 July	TBA	
4 August		AGM
1 September	TBA	
6 October	TBA	
3 November	Roger Farrow	Insects
1 December	Christmas party	

Burrawang Country Club weekend

While it may sound like a fancy resort, the Burrawang Country Club is in fact a private wildlife reserve, next to Barlings Beach on the south coast. Thanks to a member my camera club had five cabins booked for four days of the ANZAC Day long weekend.

With other members, we left early Friday morning in mist and light rain, via Araleun, stopping for photos whenever we felt the urge, and finally arriving late afternoon.

Our planned trips for the weekend were varied, but our sightings were amazing for such a short period of time.

Lunch at Deua National Park on Friday, saw a myriad of small birds.

Saturday at the Eurobodilla Botanic Gardens, I was waiting for the yellow-breasted robins to return when I spotted a 1 m+ Red-bellied black snake heading up the grass just behind me.

The next day we saw seals lazing in the water at Bingie Bingie Point, as a storm brewed on the horizon.

Out last day gave us three amazing sightings. I'd seen and photographed sea eagles every day but always had the wrong lens

and light conditions, but on the last morning, an eagle flew low across my position with the sun in the right position. Yes!

Then on our last walk along the beach into Tomakin we were amazed by a large shoal of mullet in the waves very close to shore, exciting the kids surf fishing.

Lastly, just as we were about to leave, a lace monitor wandered close behind our cabin.

We also visited Mogo Zoo but space to show all my photos is limited.

Alison Milton





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 **Phone:** 6254 1763

Email: fieldnaturalist@yahoo.com.au

Website: under construction

All newsletter contributions welcome.

Email: alison.milton@health.gov.au

Editor



Monthly meeting venue: Division of Botany and Zoology, Building 116, Daley Rd, Australian National University. (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: