

November 2017
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GPO BOX 249
CANBERRA ACT 2601

FIELD NATURALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF CANBERRA INC.

FIELD NATTER

MEETING—THURSDAY 2 November 2017

7:30 pm Australian National University

Gould Seminar Room, Building 116, Daley Road, ANU, ACT

details back page

A BYO challenge to Field Natters

Speakers: Field Nat members

The Field Nats' 2017 meeting presentations schedule ends with a CHALLENGE that will be a blend of BYO, smorgasbord and show and tell.

Members are invited and challenged to bring five minute presentations that will stimulate our naturalist curiosity and activate anew, our senses of awe, wonder and investigation.

We aim to show short videos such as the dazzling TedX presentation on beetles' extraordinary colours and exoskeleton patterns that Rhian discovered.

Further details on page 2.



Emerald Moth possibly *Chlorocoma stereota* photographed at Strathnairn Homestead Gallery, Holt, ACT

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November meeting 2017: A BYO challenge

We had four days' notice before the Field Natter's deadline that we wouldn't be hearing about the flora of the Molonglo Valley from Meredith Cosgrove and Richard Milner. Sorry to disappoint you. However, we were quickly able to come up with a new plan.

Members are invited and challenged to bring five minute presentations that will stimulate our naturalist curiosity and activate anew our senses of awe, wonder and investigation.

We aim to show short videos such as the dazzling TedX presentation on beetles' extraordinary colours and exoskeleton patterns that Rhian discovered.

Another possibility is the Bettongs project, which links in with the FNAC sponsored Bettong Prize that will have been awarded on 25 October to student creators of picture books.

The Ginninderra Falls Association brochure on the threats to the Ginninderra Falls reserve will be available together with explanations of the issues.

We're all busy people. You might like to describe your current project, your current passion, pastime or creative obsession.

Please bring the books that have inspired you in recent years and we can compile a photographic collage as a bibliographic guide.

You may also have books to lend out on an exchange basis; ones that you'd encourage others to read before they reach the raffle!

I'd like to ask you to help me compile a list of organisms you'd likely find in your backyard or nearest pocket park. I'd like to produce a Passport similar to that from Nature Play CBR. It encourages the under-12s to go on Missions to observe and record what they see and find around them.

Even better, bring your short accounts of what you've seen and enjoyed in nature recently, or your favourite photographs of any subject that captured your imagination.



For example the Emerald Moth found resting during Strathnairn's Open Day on 14 October. It was found by a nine-year-old as I chatted with her father. As I hope you can see, the colour was incredible. The brain wasn't working at first when I wondered which butterfly it was and then drew a blank when going through Suzi's book. Zooming the photo showed instantly that the antennae were feathered: it's a moth so no wonder it had assumed that position and wasn't about to move from waiting for the sun to keep it warm. Moments to treasure: a new insect and a child who hadn't lost her curiosity and wonder.

I'm sure you'll have more suggestions than the above. Please let me know and we can send round a special email invitation to encourage attendance.

Rosemary Blemings

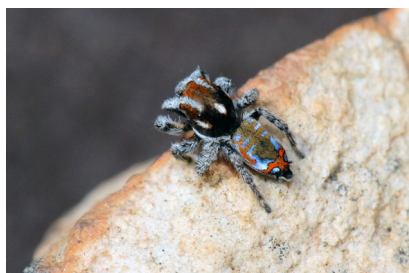
Arachnids

These interesting arachnid photos were submitted by relatively new member Lauren Venugoban.

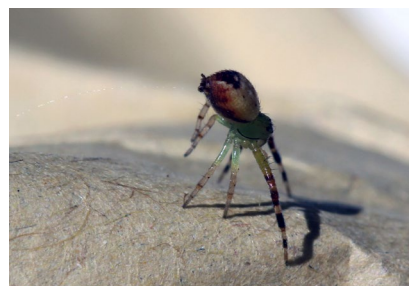
Hopefully this will inspire more long term members to also submit photos.



Scorpion found on Mt Ainslie (possibly a marbled scorpion) fluorescing under UV light



Kicking Peacock spider found on Black Mountain



Flower spider attempting to travel by using silk to catch the wind



Mystery spider, but checking the species listed on Canberra Nature Map, I think this is a Facemask Crab spider; *Cymbacha ocellata*. Ironically, the only sighting with a photo on Canberra Nature Map is mine photographed in Higgins in February this year. The spiders inhabit the tip of a leaf, folded over, so are usually completely hidden within this 'tent'. Curious, I opened the 'tent', so well done to Lauren for getting this photo.

Editor

And the progeny of Roxy went forth...

No, not a quote from Leviticus, but today's wonderful news from Mt Ainslie. 'Roxy', the second breeding female Rosenberg's Monitor that I spied laying eggs in a termite mound in February is now truly a mother. With knowledge of these goannas' egg gestation period (eight months, no less), I've been watching the termite mound closely these last days, and today the first hatchling appeared!

This is great news for three reasons. The obvious one is that it is another generation of these rare reptiles that are just clinging on in Canberra Nature Park; secondly, it is a different genetic line from last year's brood of the famous Rosie and Rex and thus means greater genetic diversity and a healthier population (provided these new ones survive the very poor odds for hatchling survival);

and thirdly, the likelihood of hatching was low in that Roxy was a poor mother, doing hardly any back-filling of the mound (guess who helped...) and very little guarding of the mound afterwards, and the mound was disturbed twice during the year, probably by echidnas digging for termites.

Behold and enjoy yet another wonder from the holy mount of Ainslie.

Matthew Higgins

P.S. As if Steph and I haven't got enough to do, what with watching no less than seven pairs of nesting Tawny Frogmouths, now these bloody goannas to watch over as well. Crikey, who'd be a parent? Oh, and during the same walk today I saw a pair of shinglebacks together, and an echidna for the second day in a row. What's not to like??



Hatchling ('Rox-on?') as first seen.



Rox-on sensing its environment by tongue-flicking - note incredible length of tongue.



Rox-on heading back into the mound to tell its siblings, 'Hey, guess what, there's more to life than this crumbly termite mound'.



Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra Inc.

Who are the Field Naturalists?

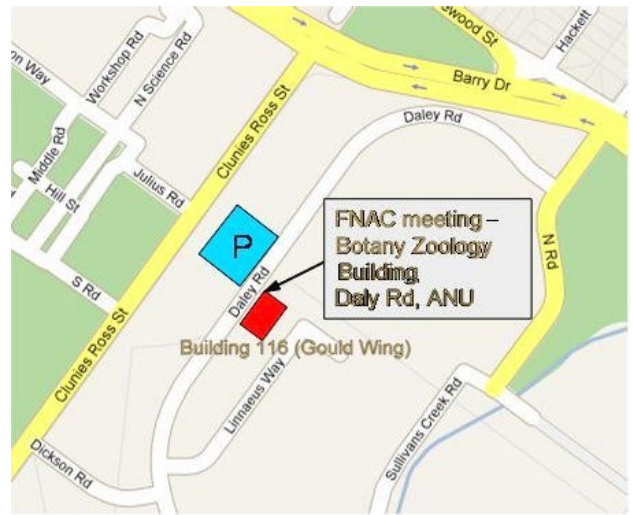
The Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra (FNAC) was formed in 1981. Our aim is to foster interest in natural history by means of meetings and regular field outings. Meetings are usually held on the first Thursday of each month. Outings range from weekend rambles to long weekends away. Activities 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.

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Monthly meeting venue: Division of Botany and Zoology, Building 116, Daley Road, 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:

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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: