



Toodyay Naturalists' Club Inc.
THE TNC NEWSLETTER
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*Above - Mudskipping and
Left - Orphans.*

*Both part of the ANZANG
prize winning portfolio by
Georgina Steytler.*

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*The Toodyay Naturalists' Club Inc.
is grateful to the Wheatbelt NRM
for their support in producing
the TNC Newsletters*

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wheatbelt
natural resource
management

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

WELL WINTER IS NEARLY gone, what a wet winter it has been, so wet some of the local farmers cannot get into their paddocks. All this should give us a wonderful display of wildflowers and give all the trees a thorough soaking through our Nature Reserves.

The highlights over the past months were the excursion to Kellerberrin staying at the 'Prev' with walks through Durokoppin and Charles Gardner Reserve, with Neville giving his amazing talks on the flora we came across.

Due to the weather being very unkind the Millennium Kids meeting in May was cancelled so we hope to catch up with them next year.

We are still to confirm our new Adopt-a-Spot and as soon as this is confirmed we will advise all members.

The Club is looking to share a building with other Community Groups, this will allow us to have a central location in town but it is not big enough to hold our monthly meetings, so these will still be at the CWA hall; we will keep you informed.

Please visit our website to view the programme, and don't forget to log in and make use of the sightings.

Exciting news! 18.08.16 ANZANG (Australian, New Zealand, Antarctica and New Guinea) Bioregions *PHOTOGRAPHIC AWARDS*. Just to let you know Georgina [Steytler] won the Portfolio Award, presented at the Awards Finals in South Australia. She entered 6 photos which were all included in the portfolio so she had a good chance, and was successful; this was the award she wanted to win so she should be happy. Georgina was also 'runner-up' in the 'Threatened Species' and the 'Animal Behaviour' categories.

Looking forward to the next few months.

President Brian (Foley)



CITY OF PERTH 2016 WILDLIFE SHOW

by Robyn and Brian Foley

In 1946 a young science teacher and the president of the Western Australian Naturalists' Club, Vincent Serventy, together with his brother Dom and sister Lucy, proposed to have a wildlife show to encourage children to learn about live plants and animals. It was held at the Perth Town Hall and proved very popular.

Unfortunately, in the early years of the 1970s, laws were brought in by the Department of Wildlife to protect native flora and fauna. This change greatly impacted on the annual Show with it finally ceasing in 1975.

However, over a three week period, from Tuesday 28 June, the City of Perth hosted the Wild Life Show at the Perth Town Hall in conjunction with the Western Australian Naturalists' Club. We went to the show opening, it was a lovely night, it was like old home week, meeting lots of people, the McCrums, Griffiths and many of the other Nats.

John Dell was there and was awarded a special prize for his Nats work. I spoke to him for a while and he was quite good but had to sit down most of the night. He was next to our black cocky Bob so they got to know each other. John would love to come to a Toodyay Nat's meeting but cannot drive that distance so we must organise to pick him up sometime. He asked how Wayne was, and we told him ok - can't keep the bugger down.

They had lots of photos of the history and displays. I recommend that you go, as it is on until the 20th July, you can get details from the Perth City Council website.

They had a welcome to country given by a Mathew McGuire. He sang two songs and talked about the dreaming, he was very good. We have his details and he would like to come to us for a talk so next year will fix him in or if we have a spot later this year maybe. His parents come from Northam so he knows lots of stories about the river etc around Toodyay.

Also chatted with Peter J Bridge of Hesperian Press, the author of many historical works, including 'Toodyay Gold' and 'Toodyay Old Gold'. His daughter is an artist and she wants to paint Nolan's Rock on the Jimperding Brook. It appears that photos of this rock are prized and photographers travel from the east just to photograph it. Apparently Michael Nolan (the bushranger) hid in this rock. He would be another interesting person for us or the historical society to have as a guest.

Nolan's Rock looks interesting, and could be a possible future excursion. It was well worth a trip to Perth to visit the exhibition!

*Facing Page 2 - the Toodyay Nats Club
co-Patron John Dell APSM*

*Right: Professor Lyn Beazley AO FTSE,
with TNC co-Patron, John Dell APSM*



LOBBYING CAN WORK

by Bridget Leggett

FINALLY it happened, a clean up of Red Hill. Thanks in no small part to lobbying from Toodyay folk, spearheaded by the TNC's, Greg Warburton, Chair of the Toodyay Tidy Towns Committee.

Soon after 8.00am on Saturday 14 May 2016, the Community Bus set off from the Toodyay car park, loaded with enthusiastic locals all set to blitz a six kilometre section centred round the Red Hill Waste Management Facility.

It was another of the cooperative ventures we have come to associate with clean-ups. KABWA (Keep Australia Beautiful, WA), Main Roads, the East Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC), and the City of Swan actively participating in the planning and the day.

In all, over 60 volunteers took part, including seven TNC members, another thirteen Toodyay citizens, a strong contingent from the Gidgegannup Progress Association, Hon Ken Wyatt (*Member for Hasluck*) and four of his office staff, and folks from another twelve or so suburbs.



More than 300 bags of rubbish and many large items were collected, with a combined weight of 1.46 tonnes. Some 70 bags were used to fill the **WHY?** sign now located on the corner of Talbot Road and Toodyay Road. Main Roads is continuing the good work, tackling the steeper sections that were not considered safe enough for volunteers to clean up.

The observant amongst our members found more than just litter. The leaves of at least four species of orchids were noted hidden in the undergrowth, healthy *Kennedia prostrata* plants were present in quite a few places, and bushes of Pincushion hakea (*Hakea laurina*) were smothered in flowers.

But, perhaps best of all, there is interest in making this an annual - or even a biannual event! So the road might stay cleaner than it was.

Above: Desraé Clarke and Andrew Carr working on the Toodyay Road at Red Hill, with the city on the skyline.

Photo: Bridget Leggett

Below: Toodyay volunteers detoured for a photo opportunity at the end of the Red Hill Clean up.

Photo courtesy of Joanne Gray



GEORGINA A WINNER IN ANZANG

The Toodyay Naturalists' Club members are thrilled to have the extremely talented photographer, **Georgina Steytler**, amongst their number. Georgina is pictured below with her dog Tawny by the banks of the Avon River.

Georgina has had a number of successes in the Australian Geographic (ANZANG) Nature Photographer of the Year competition over the last couple of years and this year, 2016, won the Portfolio Prize. The Portfolio Prize is awarded to the photographer with the best portfolio of six or more images. Georgina's six winning images were: Mud Skipping (Broome, WA) and A Fishy Present (Bremer Bay, WA) (both in the Animal Behaviour category), Emu Field (Animal Portrait- Toodyay, WA), Orphans (Human Impact- Lake Ninan, near Wongan Hills, WA), Driftwood River (Landscape- Lake Ninan, WA) and Buller's Albatross (Threatened Species- Lord Howe Island, NSW).

In awarding her the prize, the judges made the following comments:

"The best photographers have a visual approach that is as unique as a signature and here it was poise, peace and subtlety that set them apart. Displaying broad photographic ability and creative vision, this photographer showed that you don't need to scream to be heard - they got our attention with a whisper."

Mud Skipping was also Runner-up in Animal Behaviour and Buller's Albatross was Runner-up in Threatened Species.

Her previous photographic achievements include:

2014: Australian Geographic (ANZANG) Nature Photographer of the Year competition - Finalist, Threatened Species (Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo)

2014: Australasian Bird Fair, Winner (Digital Creations)

2015: Sydney International Exhibition of Photography, Bronze Medal (Monochrome)

2015: Australian Geographic (ANZANG) Nature Photographer of the Year competition - Finalist in three categories: Catch of the Day (Animal Portrait), River Red Gums (Botanic) and Survival (Interpretative)

Winner, Threatened Species (Juvenile Fairy Tern)

Georgina has been taking bird photos since around 2007, when she first joined BirdLife Australia (then known as Birds Australia). BirdLife Australia is Australia's largest organisation devoted to the future of our native birdlife.

Georgina is a member of BirdLife Western Australia's Community Education Committee where for many years her role has been to prepare PowerPoint slideshow presentations for talks to be given to various community groups throughout Western Australia, including schools, nursing homes, Probus and Naturalists clubs.

Georgina is currently the Photo Competition Co-ordinator for BirdLife Photography. BirdLife Photography is a Special Interest Group of BirdLife Australia with members from all over the country. It provides both a forum and resource for photographers, bird observers and the general public to enhance their knowledge and appreciation of birds through the medium of photography.



To find out more about Georgina or to view her photos, go to her website:

www.wildandendangered.com.au

Left: Georgina Steytler and her dog Tawny next to the Avon River in Toodyay

Nature Walk in Wongan Hills

by Lyn and Ian Phillips.



THE TOODYAY NATURALISTS' CLUB visited Wongan Hills on a fine sunny Saturday morning on the 18th June. The temperature was low, with a brisk cool wind and we stopped at Lake Ninan on our way to Wongan Hills. A red flowering *Eremophila* species (possibly *E. glabra* or *E. decipiens*) and *Scaevola spinescens* (commonly known as the Currant Bush and used as a cancer remedy) were the only plants in bloom, but many melaleuca, rhagodia, and maireana species were seen growing around this beautiful salt lake.

We then headed for the comfort of the Tourist Centre, to talk to the local people, Ian Smith and Robert Doust,

about the wild flowers and walks available. Here we enjoyed a delicious shared morning tea with Desrae, Wayne, Jacquie, and Bridget.

About 10am we followed signage and drove just north of the town to where I thought the Christmas Rock Walk began. Actually, we soon realised we were heading in the reverse direction, by reading the trail signage – still we were not lost as we followed the power line track which had some regeneration of native shrubs, many of which were flowering.

Reviewing those photographed, we saw *Hakea scoparia*, *Hypocalymma angustifolium* (myrtle), *Cryptandra myriantha*, *Scaevola virgata*, *Grevillea umbellulata*, *Conostylis androstemma*, *Melaleuca* sp., *Lomandra effusa*, *Drosera* sp. and many more plants which were not in bloom yet! The old Salmon gums and York gums are part of the Wheatbelt vegetation that we take for granted – truly amazing trees, adapted to this harsh climate (only 8 inches of rain fell in 2010!)

Finally, we reached the creek that flows from an area of granite rock, down to the town dam, and has been diverted into a rock wall catchment, which made a shady pathway to walk along. On the first granite rock area, we checked for life in the water pools and saw only tiny tadpoles. A Lesser Wanderer butterfly provided us with entertainment, as it was rather slow and perhaps had just emerged from its chrysalis! A *Glischrocaryon aureum* or Common Pop flower, charmed us with its bright yellow flower.

Native snails were seen crawling on the rock; I have seen them in this area before.

The large flat granite rock at the eastern side of the walk, also has the rock wall catchment around its perimeter and on the edge of this were growing beautiful *Kennedia prostrata* or the Running Postman or Scarlet Postman. The *Thryptomene australis* subsp *australis* were also beginning to flower, while the *Hakea petiolaris* or Sea Urchin *Hakea* were finishing. The small 'rock gardens' on the granite always fascinate me, with the moss and lichen adding rich colours of green and grey, during winter. The *Drosera heterophylla* and minute *Tricoryne* sp. are often seen growing here.

Bridget and I admired the gimlet flowers and she found a smooth tree trunk which reminded us of part of the female anatomy! Again, we saw the orange and brown pea flower on a bush with narrow heart shaped leaves, but I was unsure of its ID (*Gastrolobium* sp).

Lunch time at the Apex Park with the rest of the Toodyay Nats after the 2.5km walk was lovely – sitting on a limestone wall chatting and eating! Here most of the members stayed for the General Meeting, and only Georgina, and her Victorian visitors from Bird Life Australia, Graham and Annette, went on to Mt Matilda with Ian and I following. We passed the local Men's Shed blokes with a ute-load of bird nesting boxes they were about to erect in Elphin Reserve where the Carnaby cockatoos nest.

Nature Walk in Wongan Hills ... cont

Here it was decided to search for the rare trapdoor spider burrows that Ian and I had seen on a previous Night Stalk. I explained how the spiders make a rosette shape with leaves at the entrance to their trap, so they can feel when insects walk across this arrangement. Almost immediately Georgina found a burrow of the *Idiosoma nigrum* or Shield-back trapdoor. Then we all kept finding them and it seems that each population has a few major spider burrows with several smaller ones as well – the next generation!

The other endangered trapdoor spider, the *Aganippe castellum*, builds a raised burrow at the base of a tree trunk and we saw one of these too!

Following instructions given to me by a local orchid enthusiast, Rita Randell, we walked further west towards a breakaway and found many *Pterostylis scabra* or the Greenhood Snail orchid. The other orchid she had told me to look for was located just off the main trail near the stairs of rock. Thanks to Georgina's sharp eyes we did find it, but the *Caladenia drummondii* or Winter Spider orchid was almost dead!

The Mt Matilda Walk Trail has a 5km and an 8km trail for very fit individuals, and it was decided to walk to Gimlet Gully, to search for bats. Since we had limited time we walked the trail in reverse, along the eastern front, where the views across the valley are amazing.



*Left: Grevillea petrophiloides; and
Above: Hakea Multilineata*

Photos: Lyn Phillips

Not a lot of wildflowers to report but I did see one endangered *Philotheca wonganensis*, or the Wongan *Philotheca*, that I have helped to survey in the past. We walked by the *Acacia pygmaea* or Dwarf Rock wattle, which is sign posted. Also I photographed the *Boronia ericifolia* flowering which is a Priority 2 plant, and we saw the beautiful *Grevillea petrophiloides* or Pink pokers, which are the local Wongan Hills Shire emblem. The *Hakea multilineata* was just unfurling its stamens.

Nature Walk in Wongan Hills ... cont

We walked past Conways Corner Lookout and then came across signage about the four bats that live in the hills on the edge of an impressive valley with gimlet trees. Graham and Georgina were eager to get down and have a squiz! Three of us climbed down and tried to see inside the small caves, which were very dark; Georgina was looking for bat scats!

Truly a magical walk and I am sure Ian enjoyed his day out - although he was not too keen to stop at the Elphin Reserve prescribed burn site, on the way back to town.

The *Daviesia euphorbioides*, Wongan Cactus, is flowering here and they are only one year old. Many other plants are flowering and I do not recognise many of them – truly a hot spot for diversity considering the last time a major fire burnt here was in 1946!

*Right: The Wongan Cactus (*Daviesia euphorbioides*) with a native bee. This prickly plant is listed as 'Threatened Flora (Declared Rare Flora)'. It was the subject of a number of TNC surveys during the 90s. TNC members camped at the Wongan Pistol Club and assisted CALM (now DPaW) to survey the road and rail reserves, counting the numbers and recording their health.*

Photo: Lyn Phillips



Left: Boronia ericifolia, a 'Priority Two' species

Photo: Lyn Phillips

DID YOU KNOW...

The Wanderer Butterfly, also known as Monarch Butterfly were not originally found in Australia but island hopped across the Pacific Ocean to Australia and finally arrived on the west coast by the 1960's.

John Dell



Above: Wanderer Butterfly Caterpillar larvae, photographed on brick paving

Photo: Margo Watkins

Right: Mum, dad and the Family. Wood Ducks with six ducklings; Duidgee Park, early August (near the Newcastle Bridge).



Photo: Clive Millett (aged 9)

PHOTOGRAPHER'S PAGE



*Above: Do I have to share ?
An Elegant Parrot appears to have a look of disdain with having to share the bird bath with two
White-cheeked Honeyeaters.*

Photo: Sharon Richards



Above: Mouse spider

Photo: Viv Street

*Right: Leaping spider orchard (Caladenia
macrostylis)*

Photo: Desraé Clarke



Idnya and Virilda Releases in South Australia

by Desraé Clarke

THE TRANSLOCATION to the Flinders Range National Park of both the Western Quoll, from Western Australia, and the Brushtail Possum, from areas of South Australia, continues. The Adnyamathanha peoples of the area use the name of Idnya for the Quoll and Virilda for the Brushtail Possum.

In May of this year a further fifteen quoll, the last of the releases commencing 2014, was QANTAS airlifted to Adelaide. The flight then continued with a Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) plane to the Wilpena area for the animals to be released that night. All animals are named and this release recognised West Australian National parks and nature reserves including Fitzgerald, Dryandra and Cervantes.

Since the May release one animal was killed, possibly by a bird of prey, and a cat attacked a female; she is recovering in the South Australian Zoo.

Trapping in June estimates the population to be approximately 160 animals but cat predation continues to threaten the reintroduction program.

A further sixty nine Brushtail Possums, from two areas of South Australia, were released in June which realises a total release over the past twelve months of 148 animals with an additional 24 new sub-adults. Unfortunately, there is a high mortality rate of pouch young which has been attributed to cat and quoll predation, heat stress and birds of prey. A study on this loss is being undertaken by a PhD student from the University of South Australia

Despite the constant trapping of cats in the release areas over the three year translocation period of West Australian Western Quolls it appears that removal is constantly followed by new animals moving into the vacated area.

It has been a very interesting program with Western Australian Keith Morris¹, Manager Biodiversity Conservation Group in the Science Division, Woodvale, WA, involved throughout the South Australian trials. He also coordinated the release of the chuditch into our Julimar in 1993.

[¹Keith is a past Guest Speaker at the Toodyay Naturalists Club]



Above: Bridget (left) and Desraé checking out a rock pool on Christmas Rocks, Wongan Hills.

Photo: Lyn Phillips

ENVIRONMENT MATTERS



Recently there have been some audacious examples of tyre dumping in Toodyay with large numbers of tyres discarded in culvert drains along River Road and actually in the middle of Balgaling Road along with a number of other sites. A hundred tyres were dumped over several weeks on a reserve by the river at the Dumbarton Road Bridge. The selfish irresponsibility of certain members of our society never ceases to amaze.

At about this time Greg Warburton, Shire Reserves Management Officer, received an email from Giacci Tyre Recyclers highlighting the services they offered. The company provided exceptional customer support and Greg got the feeling they were motivated by the

fact they were driving initiatives to solve a serious environmental issue. Before long they had an arrangement in place and in early August the Giacci truck arrived to load the stock pile of tyres. Greg and the Giacci crew were wet and covered in mud from the loading operation but Greg for one could not have been happier. The crew continued on their way with more pick-ups to do before they would off load at the re-cycling plant in Naval base. Those tiresome tyres will now be converted into a range of useful

products such as surfaces for sports areas and building material.

That was early August

(Photo above by Greg Warburton shows Peter and Jeanette from Giacci loading the tyres).



By the 18th of August there had been more tyres dumped at the site

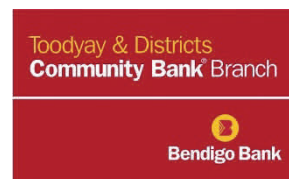
(Photo at left by Ian Whyborn)

Correction - Newsletter Number 19, April 2016 - Photographic credit on Page 9 should read Robyn Yost

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