

NATURE

OTES

MAY

1970



PHOTO: F.J.C. ROGERS

"CORREA REFLEXA"

Ringwood Inspectorate vol 7 no 3 1970.5c.

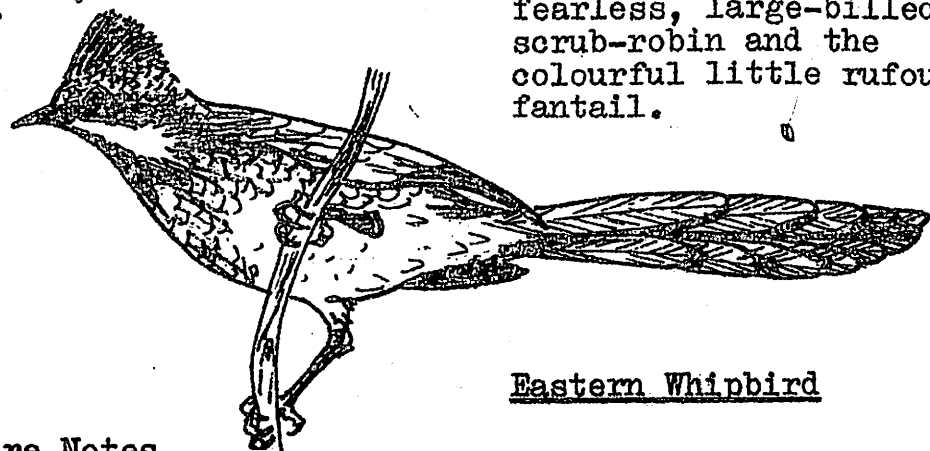
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PRIZELETTER

John Krohn of Marcellin College sends the prize letter for this month. John wins one of the newer Periwinkles - "Common City Birds" by Graeme Chapman, a delightful little book containing good descriptions and excellent colour shots of many birds found in and around urban areas. Price a modest £1.50. John writes.....

* In early January, our family visited Ferntree Gully National Park, where we saw the Eastern Whipbird, (*Psophodes olivaceus*). Although common and often heard in the tree covered Dandenongs, it is seldom seen because of its shy, retiring habits. Its name refers to its loud call, very like a coach-whip cracking. It feeds on grubs and insects in the soil.

The call is freely imitated by the superb lyrebird, as the two live in close proximity. With food abundant in spring, the bird nests in late winter, giving it no difficulty in obtaining food for the two chicks. Other interesting birds seen in the Park include the white-faced chat, the melodious grey thrush, the active brown thornbill, the fearless, large-billed scrub-robin and the colourful little rufous fantail.



Eastern Whipbird

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Produced by the
Nature Notes
Committee of
Ringwood
Inspectorate

Our Inspector speaks....

Dear Girls and Boys,

Each month I look forward to the arrival of "Nature Notes" and always, before I read the articles, I turn to the "Drop a Line" page. Have you "Dropped a Line"? Are you observing the happenings in nature all around you and passing on what you discover to other girls and boys? - and are you concerned at the very limited planning to preserve our native plants, birds and animals as our country becomes more populated with humans?

Perhaps you could have a class discussion on our disappearing flora and fauna and what should be done about it.

Then send all your findings to "Nature Notes" and I am sure the editor would be happy to publish your suggestions.

Yours sincerely,
J.N.PRUDEN
District Inspector.

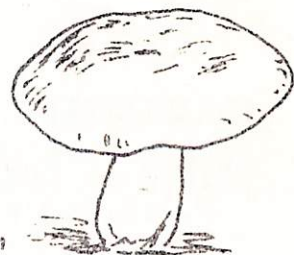
Things to Look for

Which of these fungi have you found?

Russula emetica
"The Sickener" is so called because it has a poisonous reputation. It has a bright red cap which gradually fades. The cap may be sticky.

Russula emetica

"The Sickener"



The Inky Cap does not last very long when it is picked as the gills quickly blacken and slowly turn into a dark liquid. Apparently this dark liquid was once used as a substitute for ink and so arose the name for this fungi. There are several other fungi which have this habit also.

Have you found "Shaggy Cap"?



Inky Cap

Coprinus atramentarius

Slender Parasol is a graceful fungi. The conical cap (pileus) and tall rigid stem make it easily recognised.

What colour are the spores?

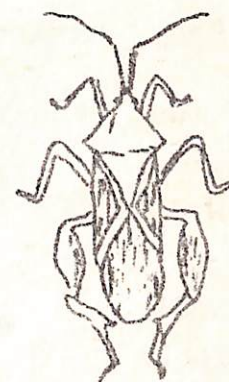
Slender Parasol Mushroom

Lepiota gracilentia



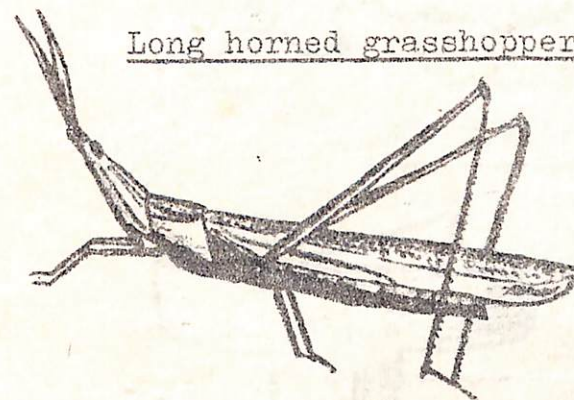
in MAY!

Do you still find the Crusader Bug on plants in your garden? This is a large brown insect with a light cross on its back. They live by sucking the sap from plants, and can do great harm if in large numbers. What do you notice when you handle one?



Crusader Bug.

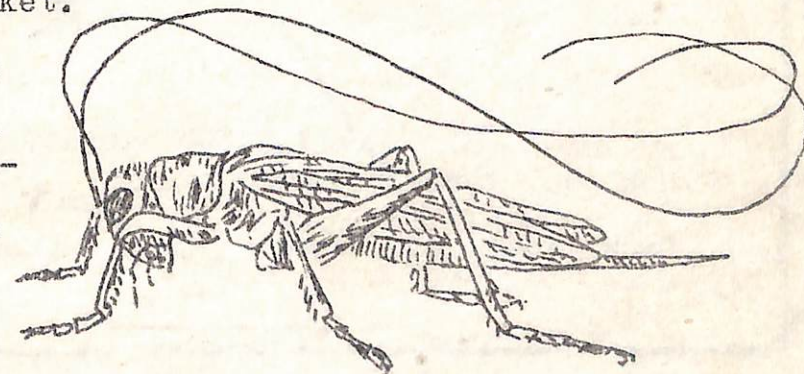
Long horned grasshopper



There are many kinds of grasshoppers, and this long-horned grasshopper is easily recognised. Where did you find your specimen and on what was it feeding?

The Paragryllacris is sometimes called Tree Cricket. It may be found indoors at times but it is quite harmless. However if carelessly handled it may give a sharp bite as a means of escape.

Paragryllacris or Tree Cricket



TIME

For many hundreds of years, man has
felt the need to "KEEP THE TIME"



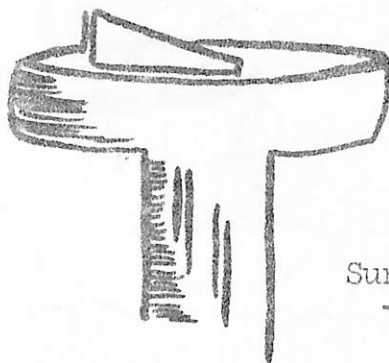
Candle
Clock



Night
String



Water Clock

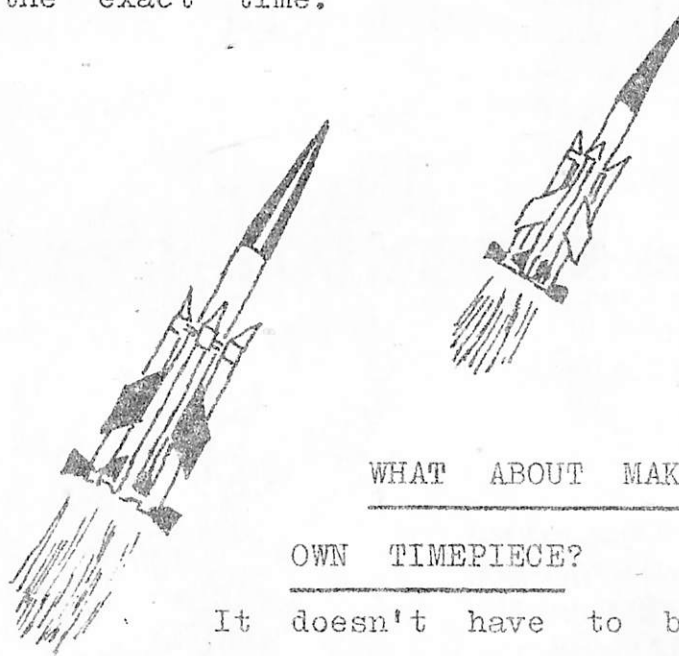


Sundial

How do these clocks work?

Draw some different "EARLY MODEL" clocks.

MAN today, has pressing needs for knowing
the exact time.



WHAT ABOUT MAKING YOUR
OWN TIMEPIECE?

It doesn't have to be an involved
piece of machinery - make something
quite simple!

Tie a weight, or press some putty to a length
of string. Swing it. Now shorten the
string and swing it again. What do you note?
Lengthen the string. Swing it. What do you
notice this time?

WHY IS THIS I WONDER?



Christmas Bells

Flannel Flower

Wattle

Banksia

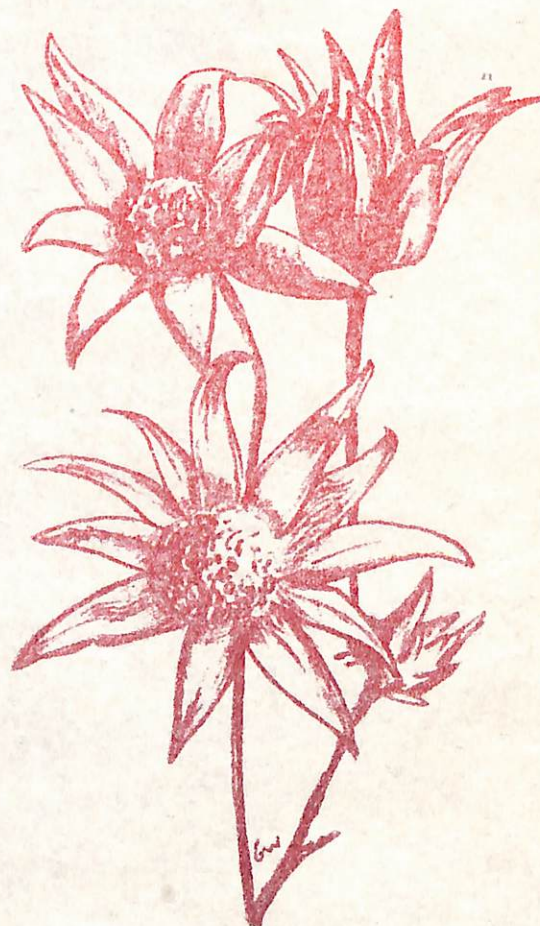
Waratah

THERE'S A STORY IN A STAMP



This set of stamps was issued in 1959. The series was designed by an Australian artist, Margaret Stones, who was attached to the staff of Kew Gardens, London. The 2/3d Wattle was originally coloured green and maize but in October 1964 it was issued in green only.

Coated with a soft velvety down, the FLANNEL FLOWER is very appropriately named. You will find the plant quite commonly in coastal sandstone areas of New South Wales but it also extends into southern Queensland and Victoria.



BANKSIAS commemorate the name of Sir Joseph Banks, a famous botanist who accompanied Captain Cook on his first voyage of discovery. The densely packed flowers or spikes are rich in nectar, attracting bees, other insects and honeyeaters. Banksias are common in most coastal regions and will also be found in some inland habitats.

CHRISTMAS BELLS will be found naturally only in New South Wales where it is common in sandy and swampy situations. The red and yellow "bells" are carried in clusters at the end of erect stems rising from the centre of a tuft of grass-like leaves. Flowers will be found in summer.

FOR YOU TO DO

*** Discover facts about the other two stamps, the wattle and waratah.

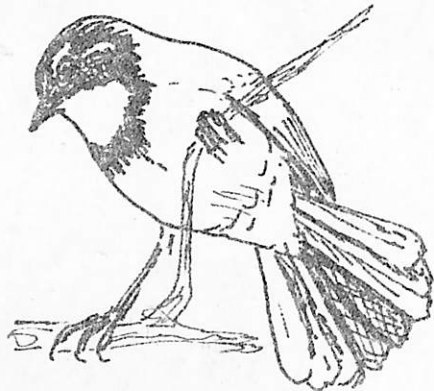
*** How many varieties of wattle can be found in Australia? What is their scientific name?

Swimmers at Mount

Acrobats, builders, and now swimmers! The seagulls, Pacific gulls and terns monopolise the beach at Mount Martha; but all the other birds (except the magpie, crow and kookaburra) in our area love to take a plunge away from the beach. Below the large tea-tree hired by the yellow robin to build his nest there is a swimming pool - a ten-inch flower-pot saucer placed on a small rockery - that the various birds patronise daily.



Yellow Robin



Grey Fan-tail

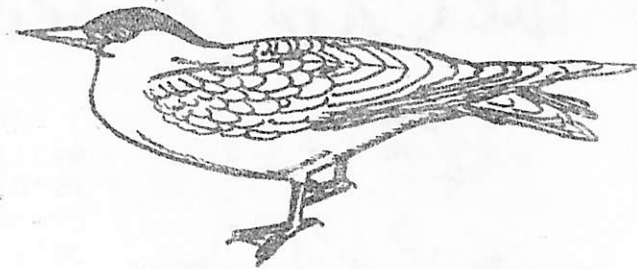
First, the grey fantail hops around its rim in a very nervous fashion, takes five or six skips anti-clockwise and then flits in the water, skimming lightly. When the little blue wren arrives, he skips only once or twice, then plunges in with a short breast stroke push and scrambles out neatly on the other side. The fancy diver of the troupe is the yellow robin who, ready to plunge, faces the water, racing style, flutters up and around to do an about-face turn in mid-air and promptly hops out to shake himself vigorously.

Martha.

Blue Wren



Several birds pair up to have their swim, one having a dip while the other keeps a lookout on a low branch of the flowering cherry tree. The white-eared honey-eater is the best of all at fluffing up his feathers to make him look like a feathery puff-ball. The most particular fellow around is the New Holland honey-eater who wastes no time in taking up to nine quick, deep immersions to complete his ablutions. I recommend that you consider putting in your garden or backyard, a bird pool like mine.



The burliest of them all, the blackbird, really takes a solo bath. His wings go up and down in a tremendous flurry, flicking half the contents of the pool out over the sides to water the tiny rock plants. What's more - he stands up and stays put, washing himself for some time with a pendulum action of head and tail.



White-eared Honeyeater

The Case for Scientific Names.

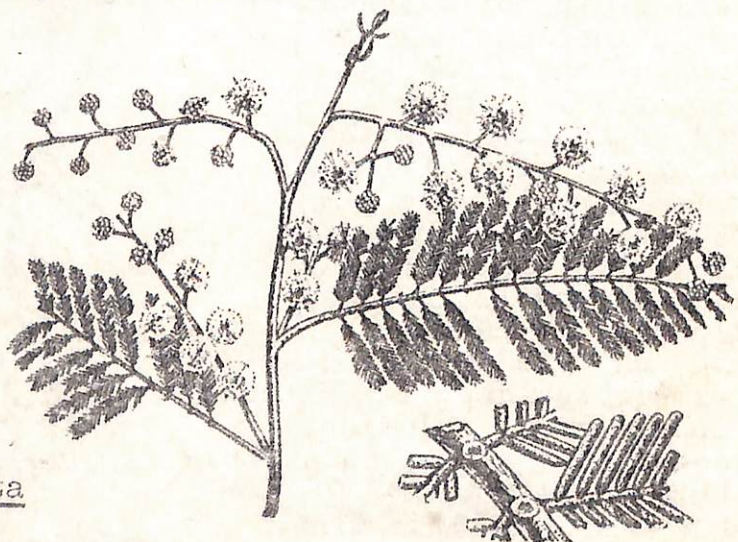


Fairies'
Aprons.

Children have invented some delightful popular names for wildflowers, and it would be a great pity if these were to die out. 'Fairies' aprons' is such a name, and it has taken the place of the previous ugly name, purple bladderwort, for the graceful water-loving plants that look like ballerinas, Utricularia.

Scientific names are made up of two words, the first always spelt with a capital initial letter, being the genus or

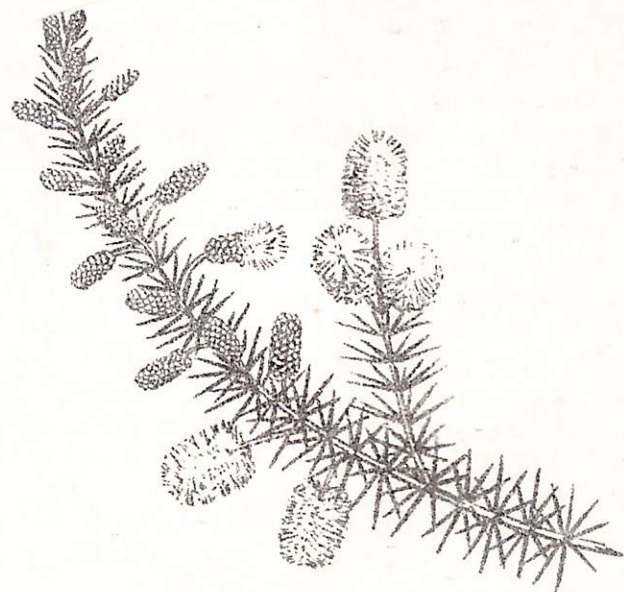
generic name, which is like a surname, e.g. Acacia (the genus or 'surname' of all the wattles), and the second, spelt with a small initial letter, the species or specific name, which is like a Christian name, e.g. dealbata. Acacia comes from the Greek language, as do so many generic names, and means 'sharp' (as some kinds have thorns), while dealbata is Latin, as are most specific names, and means 'whitened' (the feathery leaves of this silver wattle being whitish underneath).



Silver Wattle
Acacia dealbata

Part 2.

By the way, Chinese and Hungarian surnames come first like this, followed by the name by which one family member is distinguished from another. Our silver wattle is sold in Europe as 'mimosa', and our 'prickly Moses' was once 'prickly mimosa'..... but our plant of that name is different from the W.A. 'prickly moses' and so it goes on.....



Acacia verticillata

Prickly Moses

Children who make use of 'Nature Notes', as when copying illustrations, would be well advised to label their sketches with the common names only, unless they are in senior grades and wish to be 'scientific'; after all, we are all beginning the new science courses. But let us keep in mind that sketches of our own, done after our careful observations, are far better than any copied from books, however excellent! And I hope too, in our new interest in space and physical science, we will not forget that biology, the science of living things, will always be very important indeed.

Drop a Line



Josine Meijer, Grade 6 of Surrey Hills writes....

⊗ During the summer and autumn I have noticed many types of spiders. The one I saw most was the Huntsman. There was one particular one I watched grow. It was called a Garden Spider. Unfortunately I could not watch him in the daytime because he left his web then. At night however, he returned again. This happened night after night. I watched some more spiders after this and the same thing happened. The Huntsman at night spread its legs fully and did its walking then and in the daytime it looked as if it was dead. After this I thought spiders maybe nocturnal. Is this true?

ED. Spiders seem to prefer dark places but often the prey is caught in the web in daylight (especially early morning). On what do you think this depends? Do you think there could be a reason for the spider

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NUNAWADING. 3131.

staying in the background in daylight?



The Huntsman.

Pamela Halliwell of Blackburn Lake S.S. writes-
⊗ From the banks of the Goulburn river at Nagambie we see platypusses. One day last year my family and I went out in our motorboat and we saw some swans and cygnets (baby swans). The father swan flapped his wings and danced on the water to attract out attention while the mother swan and her babies swam to the reeds.

..14

ED. Good observing Pam. Yes Father probably distracted your attention away from his family to give them time to escape.

* * * * *

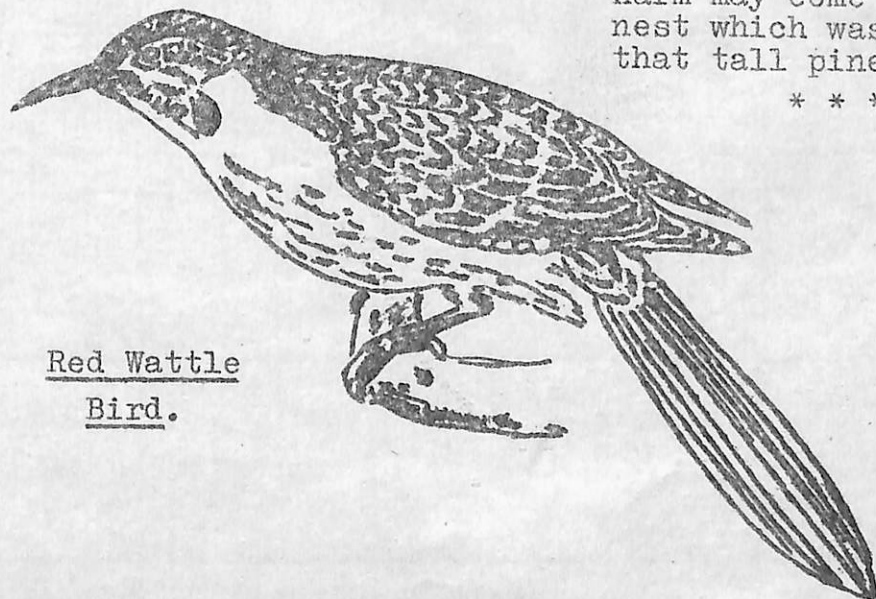
J. Moore of Camberwell writes....

⊗ On Sunday a wattle bird came down and sat on our clothesline. We gave it an apple-core and it started eating.

Time after time it came down and licked honey out of a lid and ate out of our hands.

It was amazing for it was probably making a nest. It was very interested in the colorful things and at one time hung upside down and looked into the apron pocket.

It had two red wattles underneath its ears.



Red Wattle Bird.

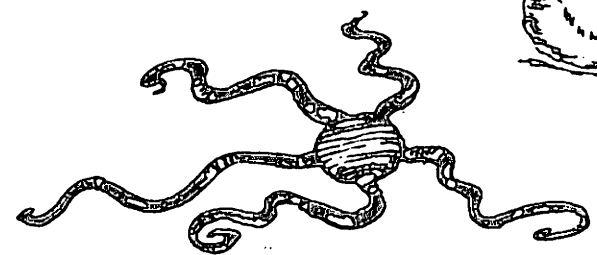
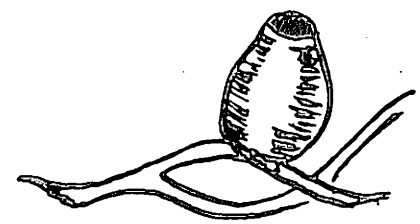
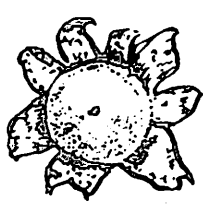
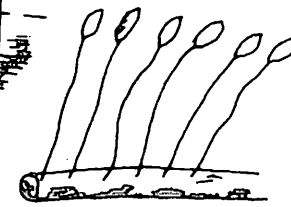
ED. Yes Nature never ceases to amaze. What else did you find out about your wattle bird? What other birds have wattles?

* * * * *

⊗ Sorry not enough room for your letter Jayne Stephens of Box Hill North S.S, but I feel sure the magpies swooped at you for fear that some harm may come to their nest which was probably in that tall pine tree.

* * *

May '70.



C
K

Q
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2

LOOK FOR THESE AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR AND MATCH THEM WITH THEIR NAMES BELOW.

SHAGGY CAP: CUP MOTH COCOON: BRITTLE STAR:
LACEWING EGGS: MOLE CRICKET: PUFF BALL: EARTH STAR

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