

# NATURE NOTES



SEPT.  
1970

PHOTO: F.J.C. ROGERS

GREVILLEA ALPINA - One of the many hundreds of examples of this beautiful native shrub - a must for all gardens.

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# ★ PRIZE LETTER ★

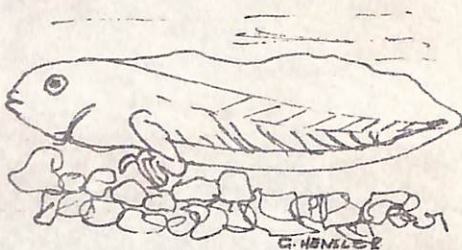
Our Prize Letter for September comes from Pierre Becy, Grade 6, Marcellin College. Pierre writes about frogs and tadpoles which I suppose is quite appropriate for some one with a French name. Pierre wins "Australian Frogs" by Densey Clyne - one of the great range of Periwinkle Colour Nature Series. I am sure this book will give you much pleasure Pierre in furthering your study of frogs.

Our class 6, has a fish-bowl with tadpoles in it and recently we put them into a small tank. Both have grass in them and we use the fish-bowl for eggs and when they hatch we put the young tadpoles in the tank. A boy built a "raft" out of ice-cream sticks and four corks. This is for when the tadpoles become frogs, as they need air for their lungs. It is interesting to watch the life-cycle of a frog. First the eggs hatch and after a few weeks the legs grow. First the back and then the front legs. All this time the tail gets shorter. The tadpole actually gets some of its nourishment from its tail! A full-grown frog has only a stump of a tail. I just

hope frogs don't die out as they are fascinating to watch.

ED. The study of nature in action is always fascinating. Good work Pierre.

\* \* \* \* \*



Tadpole



Adult Frog

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*From the  
Editor ...*

Dear Girls and Boys,

Well September is here and what a beautiful start it has been to spring!

If you have been very observant you will have noticed that Nature has been telling us of the approach of Spring for some weeks now. Have you noticed the swelling of the leaf buds on some of the deciduous trees and the bronze tips of the new growth on our own eucalypts? The birds have been whistling a little louder and are beginning the feverish activity in the all important task of building the nest and raising the brood. Spring of course is also the season of wildflowers, so I wonder how many you have discovered. I saw some beautiful hardenbergia (sarsparilla) near Hurstbridge during the holidays. It is most important to leave our wildflowers as undisturbed as possible so that others may also enjoy their beauty in years to come.

Yes Spring is certainly an exciting season with the re-awakening after the sombreness of Winter. It can be even more exciting for those with observant eyes, keen ears and noses and curious minds. It's really up to us to make the most of it.

L.J.DELACCA  
Editor.

# Things to Look for

September is Wattle Time.  
Here are two more to add to  
those of other years.

*Acacia floribunda*

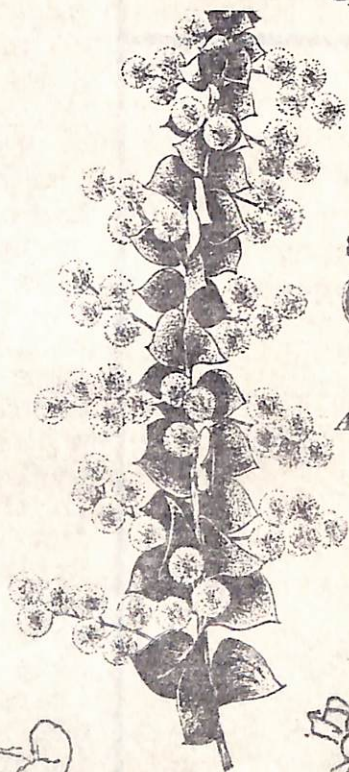
White Sallow Wattle



Sphaerolobium  
vimineum

Leafless  
Globe-pea

There are many pea-flowers during this month too.  
Leafless Globe pea, appears just like a rush-like shrub  
without any leaves and small yellow or red and yellow  
flowers. The Pod is round. See page 16 for some more.  
Nature Notes

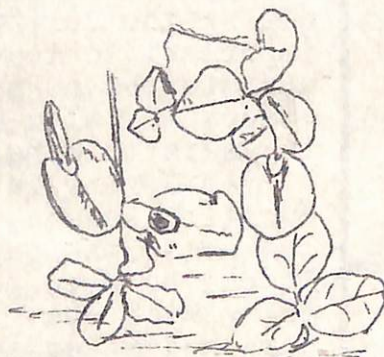


*Acacia pravissima*

Ovens Wattle



Pultenaea  
daphnoides  
Large-leaf  
Bush Pea.



Kennedyia prostrata  
Running Postman

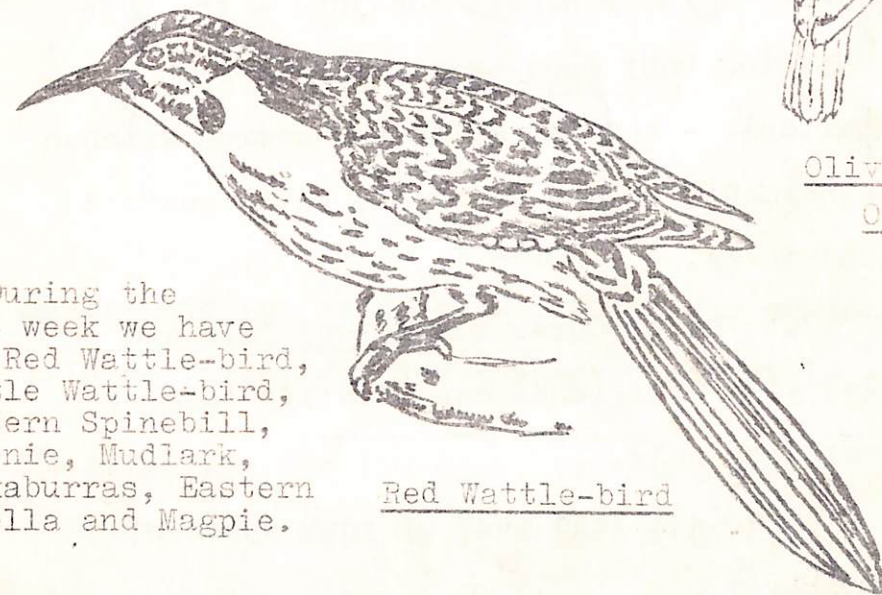
# September.

As I sat writing these notes for you  
I heard a strange bird call. Strange  
because it was the first time I had  
heard it around my home. I know it  
because I have heard the call and seen  
the bird elsewhere. It is the Olive-  
backed Oriole.



Olive-backed  
Oriole

During the  
past week we have  
had Red Wattle-bird,  
Little Wattle-bird,  
Eastern Spinebill,  
greenie, Mudlark,  
Kookaburras, Eastern  
Rosella and Magpie.



Red Wattle-bird

Further information for you.

Records of Bird Calls.

No.1. The Birds Around Us.

No.2. The Birds Outback, produced jointly  
by E.M.I. and N.S.W. Gould League.  
Australian Bird Songs - Jacaranda Press.  
Information from Society for Growing  
Australian Plants, 4 Homebush Crescent,  
Hawthorn East.

# SNIFF 'N SMELL



A good game for a rainy weekend is the Sniff 'n Smell game.



For this, you need ten jars - the type used for baby food or vegemite are most suitable - and ten different common kitchen condiments - such as cocoa, salt, custard and so on.



Put the powders in unmarked jars and see if your friends can identify them by sniffing only.

This is a good test of your sense of smell.



For a variation (providing you use no dangerous substances) you could sniff and taste.

\* \* \* \* \*



G. HEYER



Perhaps you could classify the jar contents into different classes - powders, crystals etc.



After playing the game, try mixing the contents with cold water - then with warm - then with hot water. Notice any differences?



Some substances seem to mix with the water - others do not.

Why is this I wonder?

\* \* \* \* \*

# THERE'S A STORY IN A STAMP



This stamp was issued on September 13, 1948.

It is a red colour and was valued at 2½d.

There were 73,754,880 of these stamps printed.

## VON MUELLER

When ill health forced him to leave Germany for a warmer climate, Ferdinand von Mueller chose to live in Australia.

He made Victoria his headquarters and from a home base in Melbourne he made many exploration trips into unknown areas of Victoria and other areas of Australia.

During these trips he collected and named plants. He took samples to Melbourne where they are still well preserved. He was the Victorian Government Botanist between 1952 and 1896.



Baron Ferdinand von Mueller wrote many books and letters. (It is estimated he wrote over 3,000 letters each year).

\*\*\*In 1879 he published a many volume work called

## EUCALYPTOGRAPHIA

A descriptive Atlas of the EUCALYPTS OF AUSTRALIA and the Adjoining Islands.

The illustration on the opposite page is copied from one of the many fine drawings. It depicts Eucalyptus maculata. The original illustration measures 10" x 8".

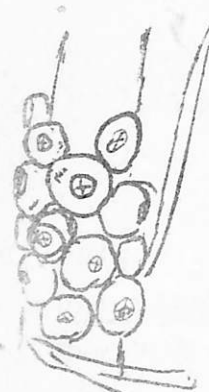
\*\*\*The plant on the bottom right of the design on the stamp is a sprig of yellow stringy bark: Eucalyptus muelleriana.



\*\*\*Paspalum is a grass native to Argentine and Uruguay (South America). It is used extensively as food for cattle and sheep. It resists drought conditions very well. Baron von Mueller introduced this grass to Victorian pastures. It was first used in South Australia.

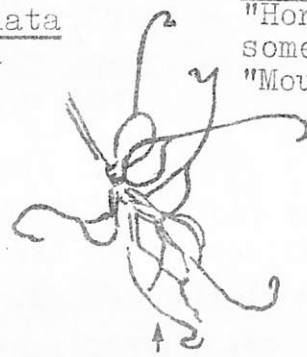
# Seed Cases .

● Have you ever thought about the tremendous variety of seed cases on our native plants? On this page I have drawn just a few of them. See how many of these you can discover and how many others you can find for yourself.



Callistemon or  
"Bottlebrush"

Banksia marginata  
Silver Banksia



Grevillea or  
"Spider Flower"

Lambertia formosa  
"Honey Flower"  
sometimes called  
"Mountain Devil"



Leptospermum  
Tea-tree



Hakea nodosa  
Yellow Hakea



Acacia glandulicarpa  
Hairy-pod Wattle

## ● BOOKS TO HELP YOU.

- Australian Nature Series No. 13. 'Fruits' by Jean Galbraith. Pub. by Longmans.
- Eucalypts by Stan Kelly Pub. by Nelsons.
- Australian Wildflower Magic by Nuri Mass Pub. by Writer's Press.
- Illustrations of the Buds and Fruits of Eucalyptus Species - Forestry and Timber Bureau. Canberra.
- Trees of Victoria by L. F. Costermans.



## ARE YOU A GOOD CAMPER?

Before you answer yes to this question, think carefully. Think about how these items listed below destroy the bush and ruin natural places.

- Fire: Careless use of axe and/or knife: Erosion:
- Camping for long periods in one place: Noise:
- Too many people camping together: Rubbish:
- Hunting for native animals: Destruction of native plants.

Can you still be sure that your answer is YES?

A SPECIAL ANTI LITTER FILM

## "THE BIGGEST BUG"

This fine 13 minute colour film was produced by B.P. to assist the K.A.B.C. in their anti litter campaign.

This film - a must for all schools is available from the STATE FILM CENTRE or the B.P. ORGANIZATION. (Ring Mr.E.Butterfield).

## EUCALYPTS

by STAN KELLY.

This magnificent volume is the most comprehensive book yet produced on the best known of all Australian plants.

EUCALYPTS contains 250 of Stan Kelly's detailed, accurate water-colours in full colour, one page per plate. A generous text gives habitat, main characteristics of each species with scientific and popular names.

The publishers are NELSONS (AUST.) and the price a reasonable \$12.00

# Drop a Line



Editor, 'Nature Notes',  
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NUNAWADING. 3131.

Dear Girls and Boys,

As promised we open "Drop a Line" this month with excerpts from two more letters on Pollution and both from Surrey Hills.

Merilyn Hiscox writes...

● Because of pollution some scientists believe that a "glasshouse effect" may threaten the world in the future. Pollution may form a barrier around the earth's atmosphere causing the heat to come in but not allowing it to escape, thus causing the ice-caps to melt which would in turn raise the level of the sea up to 300 feet higher. This would flood the low lying countries of the world. Already this is beginning to happen in Venice where the ocean rises one inch every six years.

\* \* \* \* \*

Bruce Ellen has this to say.....

● Pollution may also affect wildlife. The litterbug affects wildlife by littering feeding places and helping

13..

to pollute the rivers. Oil slicks oozing from drains and ships into the lakes are helping to kill fish. Docks are also adding to the oil slicks.

In Surrey Hills the council sends the rubbish to a tip in Oakleigh. Councils often reclaim disused quarries for dumping the rubbish. Along the railway tracks from passing trains passengers throw cigarette packets, matchboxes and various types of litter.

Why destroy our beautiful heritage with litter?

\* \* \* \* \*

☆ ED. Thank you Surrey Hills for your letters on pollution. Your grade has certainly put much effort into your work and although we

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cannot award each writer a Periwinkle, there is one on its way for your grade and I'm sure you will find it most useful.

\* \* \* \* \*

Two letters have arrived about kookaburras, the first from Sharon Cockerill of The Basin P.S. Sharon writes...

● One day last year a kookaburra flew onto the clothes line and sat on it. Mum threw some fat out to him. He kept coming and Mum kept feeding him. Soon he became so tame you could walk under the clothes line without him flying away. Some days later another kookaburra came with him. This new one was very shy and flew away as soon as I opened the door. Finally the time came when the shy one came by himself. The tame one hasn't come since and we think something has happened to it. Could you please tell me what might have happened?

☆ ED. It's impossible for me to say what happened to your kookaburra. Perhaps he went to search for new friends when the shy kookaburra "took over" his territory. You might like to write me an imaginary story telling what you think may have happened to your friend.

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Our second story on kookaburras come from Susan Delacca, Grade 3M, Blackburn Lake P.S. Susan begins.....

● Today as Paul and I were playing in the sand I saw on a branch three kookaburras laughing loudly. I noticed one of them had a mouse in its beak. This one jumped onto another branch and the others flew away. Later he flew away too.

☆ ED. What a fascinating bird is our kookaburra? Many songs, poems and stories have been written about him and I'm sure he is a favourite with most Australian girls and boys and grown-ups too, even though he at times gets up to mischief.



Susan Warren of Lilydale P.S. Grade 6, has written another bird story.

● One day some Currawongs came and took over our garden. They were flying everywhere and were calling to one another. Then one of them swooped down and picked up a lemon then another one flew down and picked up an apple. I walked up the back and got quite close to them.

They had a yellow eye and a short thick beak. Some of them had a grey breast and black body with a white rump and wing tips. P.S. (They like bread too.)

☆ ED. Yes Susan, Currawongs certainly like fruit and this of course has brought them into conflict with orchardists. I remember when at Norwood, Currawongs were constant visitors to our school-grounds feasting on the food scraps and fruit from the children's lunches.

\* \* \* \* \*

Grade 4B at Waverley North have been studying the praying mantis. They write....

● At the beginning of the year our grade found a mantis egg case which we kept in our class-room.



Pied Currawong.

Every two weeks four or five mantids hatch out.

Our grade thinks this is strange because most insects have their young hatched singly but the mantis babies hatch in groups.

☆ ED. Yes some insects and like creatures hatch singly but hatching in groups is not really uncommon. Why not make two lists - one for "singly" and one for "groups".



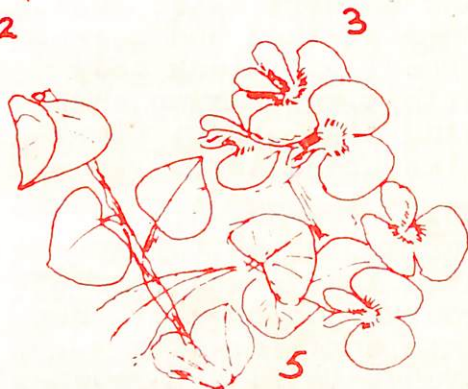
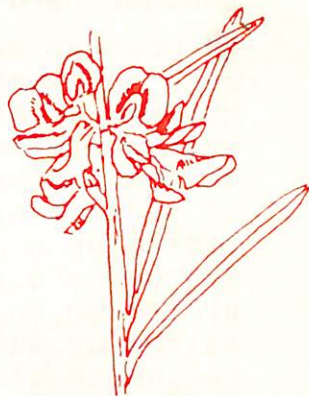
Egg Case



Grey Mantis

August '70.

# EGGS 'n BACON



1. DAVIESIA LATIFOLIA. HOP BITTER-PEA.
2. DILBURYNNIA CINERESCENS. PARROT-PEA.
3. DAVIESIA VIRGATA. TWIGGY BITTER-PEA.
4. PLATYLOBIUM OBTUSANGULUM. COMMON FLAT-PEA.
5. PLATYLOBIUM FORMOSUM. HANDSOME FLAT-PEA.

"Eggs and Bacon" are favourites with most children at this time of the year. Not hard to guess how they received their common name, but did you realize how many different types there were? Mr. Rogers has sketched some of them above. Can you discover any more?

NEXT ISSUE WILL BE AT DEPOTS ON WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 7th

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