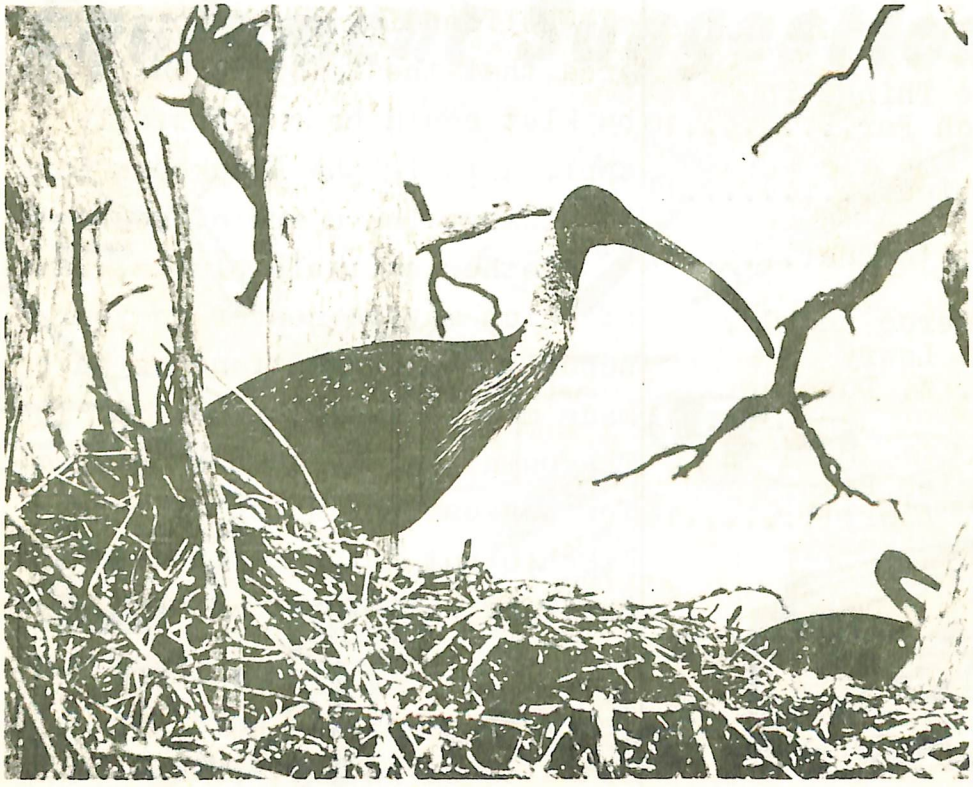
Ringwood Inspectorate

Nature NOTES

Volume II.

No. 8

P O Box 28 Ringwood East 879 1263



6 Cents

Photo by courtesy of " Aqua".

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Index

Artists.

Mrs. A. Dunstan.

H.J. Lawry.

From the files of "Nature Notes".

From the Editor....

In this edition of "Nature Notes" we have put forward many suggestions for excursions. One area that the information in this booklet could be successfully applied to is the Blackburn Lake Sanctuary. There are of course, other suitable places, many of which may be nearer to your school. The suggestions we have made may be useful in all of them. The point is, we have made just a few suggestions which you might like to put into practice - I hope that you will think of many more.

In my experience there are few more enjoyable ways for a class to spend a day, than being together with their teacher out in the bush. Try it. I am sure it will be a memorable occasion.

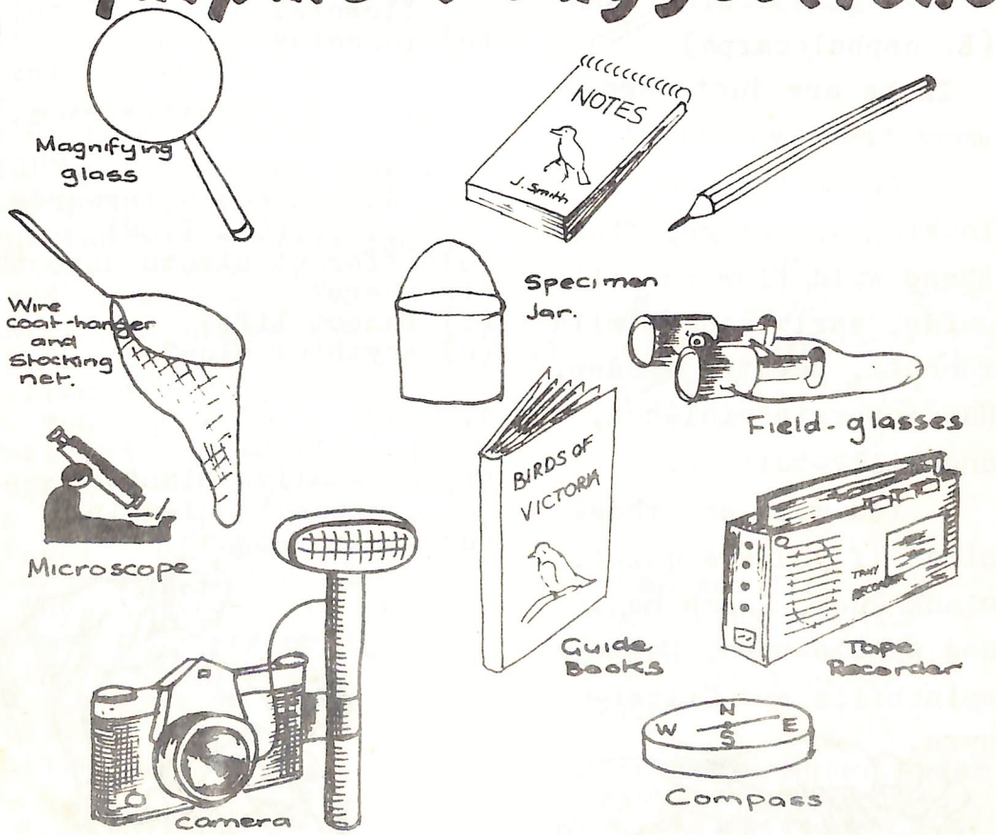
H. J. Lawry

AWAY WE GO!.....

If it is raining on the day you have chosen to go on your excursion, take your rain-coat, hat, gum-boots and umbrella. Don't be put off by a little rain, because if you are properly dressed, rain makes no difference!

Have an enjoyable time.

Equipment Suggestions



CAN YOU THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE?

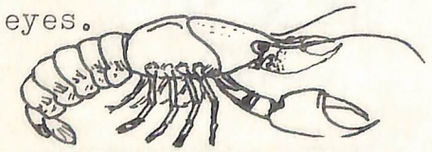
Before leaving on an excursion, it is a good idea to do some home-work. Look up some trees in any tree books you have. For example, try finding:

SWAMP PAPER BARK
(Melaleuca ericifolia)
YELLOW BOX
(E. melliodora)
SILVER LEAF STRINGYBARK
(E. cephalocarpa)

These are just three of many trees you might see..

While you are looking up things, find these wild flowers: milk maids, early nancy, wild fuchsia, scented sundew, Hardenbergia violacea, and billy-buttons.

You will see these birds if you are quiet. Black duck, Swamp hens, Red Wattle-bird, Eastern spinebills and Silver-eyes.



Observation and the Environment.

1. Examine a single tree.
(a) Bark, leaves, buds, flowers.
(b) Insect communities ?
(c) Birds?
(d) Animals?

2. Study all the plants in a small area of ground, say 6' X 6'.
(a) How many species?
(b) Different leaves, roots, flowers?
(c) Insects?

3. Examine a small stream.

N.B. Wear gum-boots....MUD!
Wash hands afterwards..
.....POLLUTION!
(a) Different plants here than elsewhere?
(b) Insect life?
(c) Anything else?

4. Signs of man.
(a) pollution?
(b) non-native plants?
(c) unnatural clearing?
(d) other signs?

Pond Life

-in the classroom!

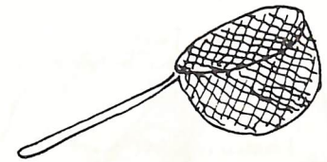
When you have examined the various aspects of the environment suggested on Page 4, you might wish to bring some specimens back to school.

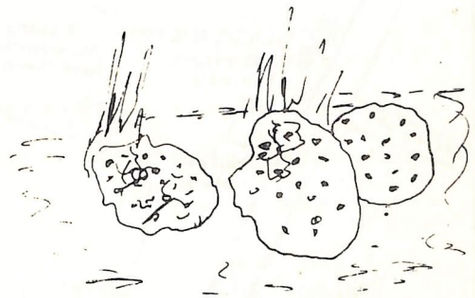
Have you a fish-tank or aquarium that is not being used? It can be an interesting focal point in your classroom. Put a large number of the creatures which you find in your aquarium and watch them closely.

Don't forget to have plenty of weeds in the aquarium and sand on the bottom. There also needs to be some rock that rises out of the water.

From your observations can you see which creatures change their shape and which remain the same or just grow larger. Do some begin to grow less in number?

Why is this? Is it because they are dying or is it because they are the food of other creatures in your miniature pond?





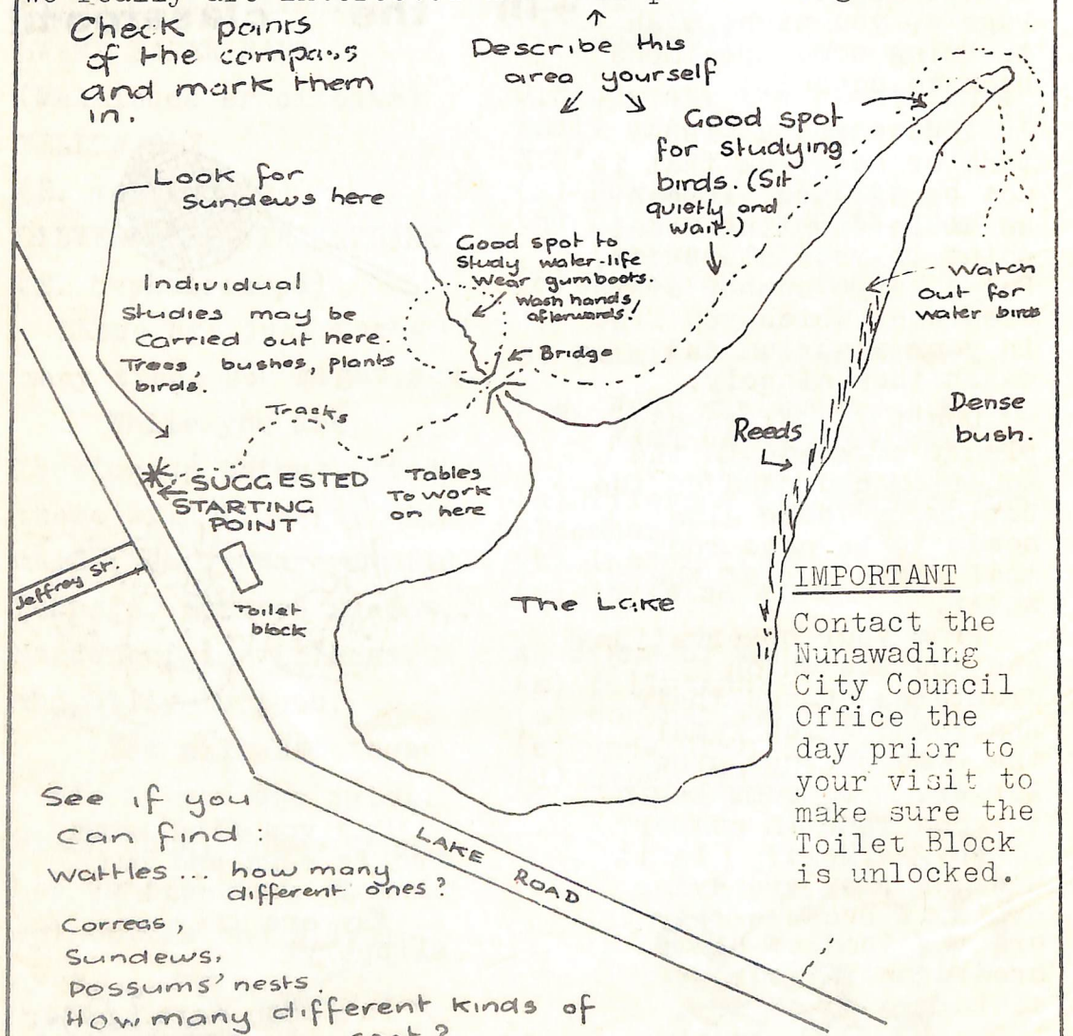
Can you find some frog's eggs and put them in your tank?

Why are they so slippery?

Put some water under a microscope - not too high a magnification.

BLACKBURN LAKE

This is a map of the Blackburn Lake sanctuary which you might find helpful. Of course if you are visiting another area you will need to make another map - along similar lines perhaps. Send us a copy if you do, because we really are interested and will put it to good use.



Locality Check

Season .....

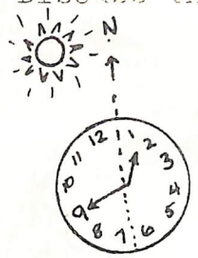
Weather .....

Points of the compass

In which direction does the sun rise? .... set?

Establish these directions in the park.

Discuss the use of the compass in finding your way.



TRY THIS!

Point the '12' on your watch to the sun. Next find the spot which is half-way between the '12' and the hour hand. A line formed through, approximates North - South.

Wind direction signs.

Wind direction

How many different ways of finding the direction of the wind can you think of ? .....

.....

.....

Safety Check.

Are there any obvious danger points in the park? Discuss this thoroughly with your teacher or guide. How may risks of danger be lessened?

REMEMBER THAT SAFETY REALLY BEGINS WITH YOU.

Signs of man.

List all the signs of the presence of man in this piece of bushland. Are all of them good? Keep this question in mind as you walk along.

Enjoy yourselves....and don't get lost!

LOOK OUT FOR.....

"Shivery Grass"

● This grass is called Large Quaking Grass It is an introduced grass which has become wide spread. "Shivery Grass" is much smaller. It too is wide spread.

Large Quaking Grass

● Watch out for the Restless Flycatcher and the Blue Wren. Both may be seen in the sanctuary.

Blue Wren

Restless Flycatcher

● If you are very quiet, you might be lucky enough to see the shy Reed Warbler.

Reed Warbler

Correa Reflexa

● Watch out for the bell-like flower of the Correa. What colour is the one you found? Are they ever any other colour ?

● This is a picture of the Early Nancy. Can you find one? DON'T PICK IT.

● Do you know what the above insect is called? Try to discover more about it.

● This bird is called the Yellow Robin. You will see it too if you are lucky.

● Among the wattles you will find is this one - the Black Wattle.

MORE THINGS to watch for

Cootamundra Wattle

☐ Is this wattle in the sanctuary?

Bluebell

☐ Observant people will find a specimen of this plant to examine.

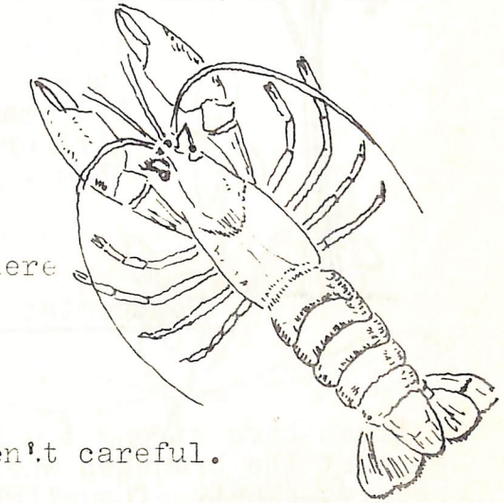
☐ Have you found any odd shapes on leaves? They might be galls. These are caused by insects which lay their eggs just beneath the outer surface of the plant. The caterpillar sucks the sap which irritates the plant, so it builds a little "growth" over the spot.

● Leaf Gall.

● Stem Gall

YABBIES

In 1973, Grade 2E at Blackburn Lake Primary School issued a challenge to other Nature Notes readers to discover more about yabbies than they did. Here is a list of their findings.



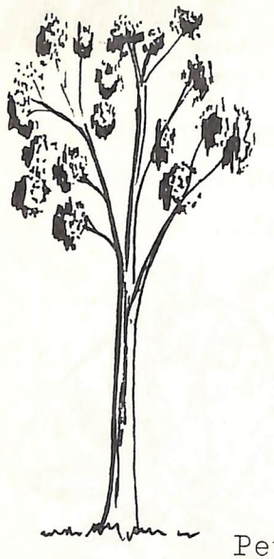
- They carry their eggs under their tails.
- They find their food in mud.
- They burrow through mud.
- They live in places where there is water.
- You pick them up behind the nippers.
- They will nip you if you aren't careful.
- They swim in water.
- They move backwards using their tails.
- They have eight legs.
- They do not have claws on all their legs.
- They have two long feelers and two short ones.

★ Can you find out more about yabbies? If you are able to, send in details to the Nature Notes Office, P.O.Box 28 Ringwood East, 3135.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Take care when playing near water.

Good hunting!

THIS 'n



In parks, in school grounds, at home, along roadsides, or in the bush we are likely to find a great many plants. Let us look more closely at some of them and find some ways that they differ. Do you know their names? Ask somebody to help you. This may be your teacher or another girl or boy who has already learnt them .

Peppermint Gum.

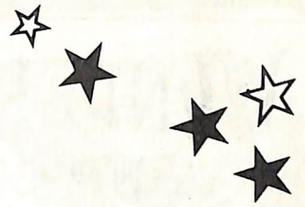
Trees have strong trunks which support the branches where they receive plenty of sunlight. On the branches we find leaves, and sometimes flowers or seed cases. Do you know why plants need sunlight? Have you learnt to recognise any of the gum trees, wattle trees or she-oaks?

Some plants do not have strong stems. So that their leaves may be placed where they receive plenty of sunlight they twist and climb; often on other plants.

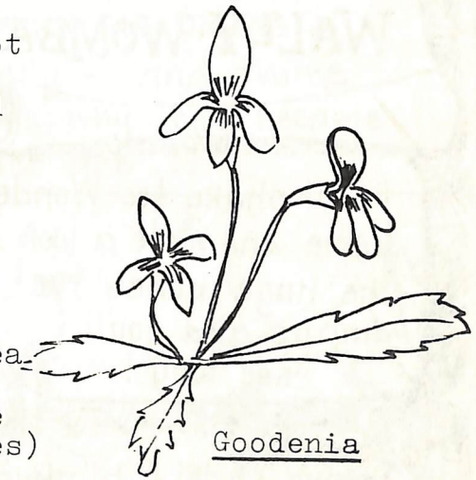
Look for some of these.

Purple Coral Pea.

THAT

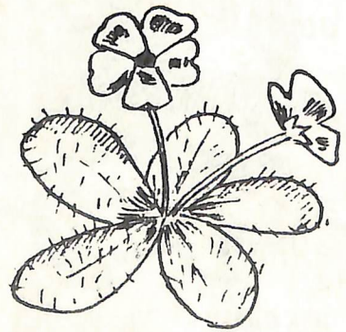


Sometimes there is nothing for these plants to twine around and so they scramble over the ground twining around each other. It is not suprising to find Purple Coral Pea creeping over old stumps or along the ground. Look for it.



Goodenia

Some plants just creep over the ground and do not climb at all. None is so well known as Running Postman. The flowers are pea-shaped and a bright red, with leaves rather like the leaves of clovers(in threes) except that they have wrinkled frilly edges. Not so well known is the Trailing Goodenia with its yellow flowers on short stalks and the leaves and stems flat along the ground.



What plants can we find that don't appear to have trunks or stems? Sundews are often very small plants of green or reddish leaves lying flat against the ground.

Try to remember where you find these plants. Do not pick them because you will get a lot of pleasure next year in going back to search for them.

WONDEROO AND CO.

CRIME BUSTERS OF THE UNDERGROWTH

Featuring this month...

WALLY WOMBAT

One fine day Wonderoo meets his friend Wally Wombat...

What's wrong Wally you look quite shaky

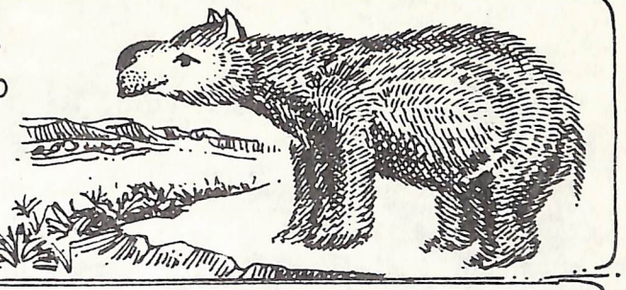
I feel shaky too Wonderoo Come and have a look at the huge bones I've dug up and you'll see why!

I-I-I think there's been a murder! W-What sort of animal would have bones that big? I hope there are no more about!!

W. Wombat

Wise old Wonderoo smiles and explains to Wally... that these are the bones of one of his ancestors—

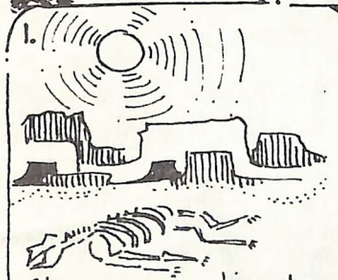
a giant marsupial weighing about two tons and called a DIPROTODON



WOW!

Diprotodons were as big as a rhinoceros Wally – and three possible reasons why they became extinct are ...

1.



Changes in climate that made much of Australia dry

2.

The coming of the dingo to Australia

3.

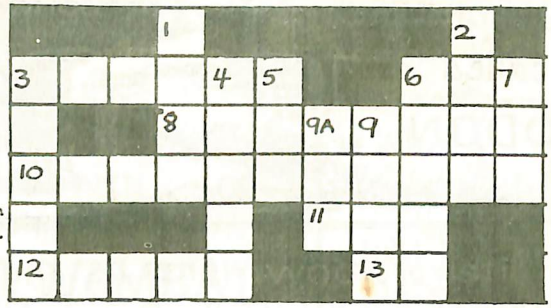
Being hunted by the aborigines for food

So you see Wally, there hasn't been a murder but you have made a very fascinating discovery

Thanks Wonderoo now I'd better bury poor old Diprotodon again!

PUZZLES

CROSSWORD



CLUES

Across

3. Two cent coin animal.
6. Prevent from speaking
8. Rolling freely
10. Giant kingfisher
11. None.
12. Clues
13. Postscript (inits.)

Down.

1. .... in 5 mins.
2. Victorian Authorised News Agency
3. Large expanses of water.
4. "Car paths"
5. The word is "dab".
6. Females
7. Governor General (inits.)
9. Journey.
9A Brightest star.

What did the kangaroo do when he found he couldn't hop?

He went to the hopsital and had a HOPERATION!

see you next month!

by "JAMES"

STOP PRESS

An excellent piece of work on Ant Lions came to hand too late for inclusion in the September issue, but within the time limit set. The work was of such a high standard that I have decided to award the writer a special prize for her effort. The lucky winner is Wendy Phillips of Ringwood East Primary School.