

# nature notes

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Rogers)...14&15, Puzzles...16.

Artists: A.Dunstan, W.Prohasky. Cover Photo: D.R.Dyer.

## **DO NOT READ BELOW THIS LINE!!!**

But you are! Stop now! .....Why are you still reading? You are simply wasting your time - stop now before it's too late and you've read the lot! Oh well don't say I didn't warn you! At least if you've got this far it must mean that you CAN read, and that you're not one of those people who just look at the pictures. Perhaps you might even know enough English to be able to write us a letter, ask a question or send us one of your projects? BUT YOU MUST STOP READING THIS PAGE.....before you find out that Junior Nature Notes will be out next month (in June). Please don't tell anyone - we've already got 1500 1st and 2nd Graders wanting them! Alright, so you have kept reading have you? Well you can stop now because this next bit won't make any sense until you've read the rest of Nature Notes...Koala, Wombat, Swan, wipe, Apes, nest.

P.S. We still have copies of Nature Notes nos. 1 & 2 if anyone would like to start ordering.

Cover: Black Swan on lake in Melbourne's Gardens.

Page 2.

Ringwood East P.S.

To the zookeeper, San Diego Zoo. 11/12/53  
Dear Sir,  
When I visited  
your zoo recently I think  
I saw a 2 headed snake!  
Could you please confirm  
this? You see I'm having an  
argument....

## **Famous Animals. no 2.**

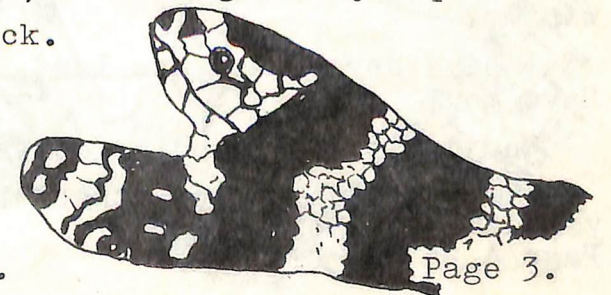


**DUDLEY DUPLEX** - The two-headed  
Californian Kingsnake.

In 1953 the San Diego Zoo in America acquired Dudley Duplex the First, a living two-headed snake. Dudley lived for 6½ years and started many arguments. Can you imagine coming home after visiting the zoo and saying: "Mum, I saw a two-headed snake today!"

"Don't talk nonsense son. I've told you before never to tell lies to me!" "But Mum." "That's enough! I don't want to hear anything more about it!"

The old saying, "Two heads are better than one," just wasn't true for Dudley. AT feeding time BOTH heads would fight over the same mouse - which would sometimes escape in the confusion! Poor Dudley just couldn't get it into his heads that the mouse would end up in the same stomach no matter which mouth ate it. The zoo-keepers had to help him change his old skins too! Three more two-headed snakes have been given to the San Diego Zoo, including Dudley Duplex the Second and Nip-and-Tuck.



"Nature Notes". May '75.

Page 3.

# On a Journey



## with Nature Notes...

The Arthur's Creek area has a large and varied bird population. Among my favourites are a pair of majestic wedge-tailed eagles which have built their nest in the area. White cockatoos with their incessant screeching are very plentiful. A less common bird is the white necked heron which may be seen standing to attention on the margins of dams and creeks waiting for its dinner. What do you think this may be? How does this bird differ from his much more common cousin - the white faced heron?

Last night with the smell of thunderstorms in the air, I noticed that the sky was alive with darting, diving bodies somewhat like large swallows, though entirely unrelated.

Can you guess what they were--spine-tailed swifts--said to be the fastest bird in level flight- their speed has been estimated at 320 k.p.h.

Can you give a reason for their being rarely seen on fine sunny days but very common at this time of year on humid stormy days?

Where do they spend our winter?

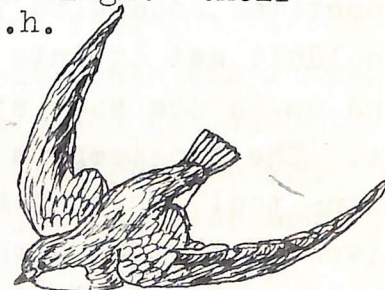
I have never seen one land. Have you?

Why don't they land as other birds do?

There are dozens of other birds in the area. Can you name some of them?

Page 4.

Spine-tailed Swift .....  
Siberia here I come?



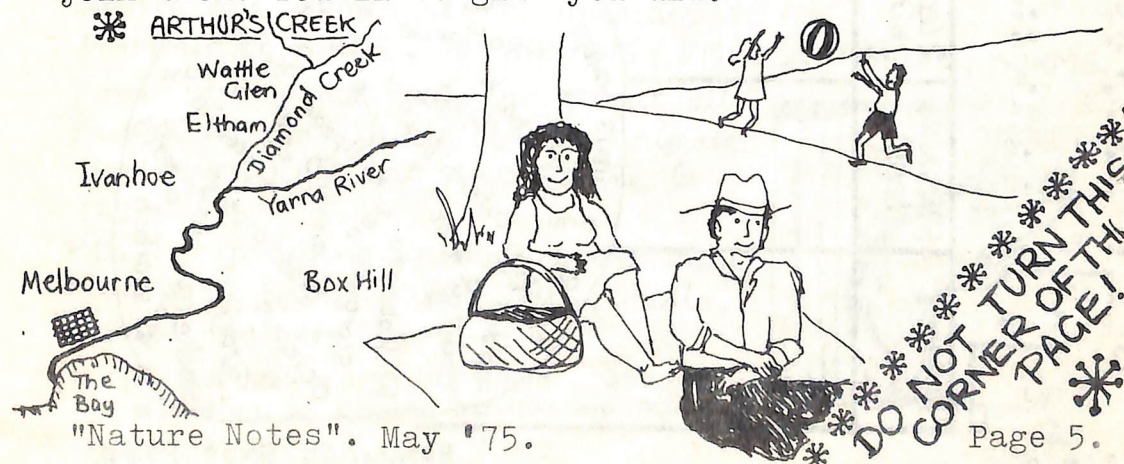
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## ARTHUR'S CREEK continued. (Part 2).

Small flocks of eastern grey kangaroos are often seen in the area and it is an unusual sight to see them feeding in a paddock midst cattle and sheep. Probably their home is in the area of the forested Yan Yean catchment area. Other less often seen animals are possums gliders and an occasional wallaby.

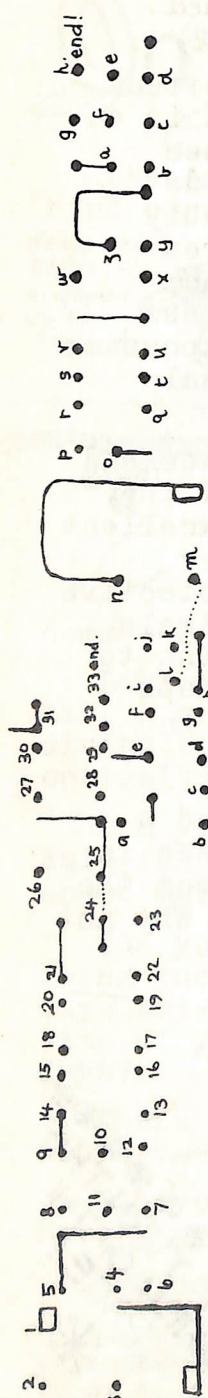
An interesting little fellow we found last weekend was the lively little Jacky Lizard- a member of the Dragon family of lizards. This reptile makes excellent use of camouflage, blending perfectly in the dry period with its surroundings. An example of protective coloration. You can add him to your list of animals that use camouflage which you made up when trying to sort animals into their groups last month. Perhaps you can discover other examples and other ways in which animals protect themselves.

Yes an interesting area is Arthur's Creek and a favourite spot in all seasons, but particularly so in springtime. Day trippers wanting to get away from the noisy city crush enjoy the drive to this area. Why not join them? You'll be glad you did.



"Nature Notes". May '75.

Page 5.




NO legs	FINS & NO legs	2 legs & wings	4 legs	6 legs	6 legs & wings	8 legs	Many legs
<div data-bbox="598 1037 1119 1500" data-label="List-Group"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dog</li> <li>blowfly</li> <li>spider</li> <li>trout</li> <li>worm</li> <li>kookaburra</li> <li>scorpion</li> <li>octopus</li> <li>grasshopper</li> <li>starfish</li> <li>snake</li> <li>booby</li> <li>starfish</li> <li>centipede</li> <li>shark</li> <li>unfouled</li> <li>seal</li> <li>crab</li> <li>crocodile</li> <li>human</li> <li>butterfly</li> <li>slugs</li> <li>snail</li> <li>em</li> <li>millipede</li> <li>monkey</li> <li>whale</li> </ul> </div>			wombat.				



Try to put all of these animals into the right columns. Cross them off as you do them!

Some tricky questions:

- Which group would you put a starfish that looked like this  in? (Trick! Beware - read Nature Notes vol. 12 no. 1. article to see how many legs a starfish has.)
- Can you think of another 5 animals for each group?
- Do you know of any animal that has four legs and wings?
- Is this a very good way to group animals? Why?

Now try putting those animals into groups according to where they live....

LAND	SEA	AIR (& land)	UNDERGROUND	LAND & SEA

A famous Greek scientist called Aristotle divided the animal kingdom up in a way something like that above. It's not a bad way of doing it is it? - although we'd need to have smaller groups because not all land animals are the same. Aristotle would put whales in the same group as fish - but are they really the same? You might say that whales are mammals, but what does that mean?

Of course all the sensible animals live underground - except when they take a shower!



Next month we will look at a way of grouping animals first suggested by a Swedish man called Linnaeus in 1758. He used these groups which he called the 6 classes of animals: MAMMALS, BIRDS, AMPHIBIANS, FISHES, INSECTS, WORMS. Find out what you can about all this. Can you think of any animals that wouldn't fit into these 6 classes?

P.S. Try grouping animals under these headings: Spiny Skins, Jelly, Shells, Scales, Feathers, Fur.

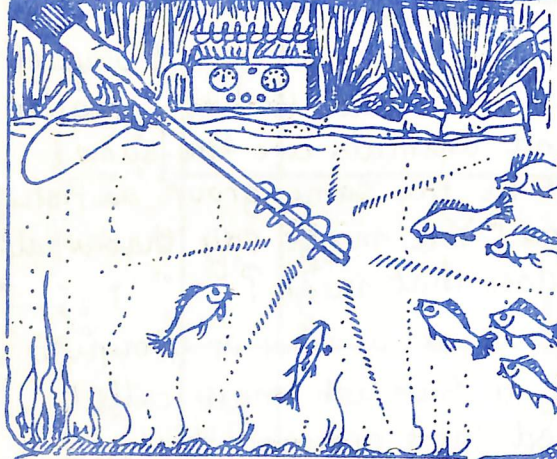
(These are not the answers to the puzzle! page - you'll just have to keep looking!)



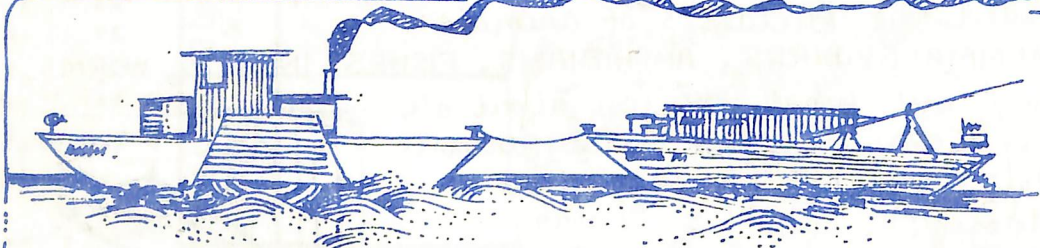
# WONDEROO'S PLAN for RIDDING THE MURRAY RIVER OF ITS CARP PROBLEM

TEXT . H.J. LAWRY  
ARTIST . A. DUNSTAN

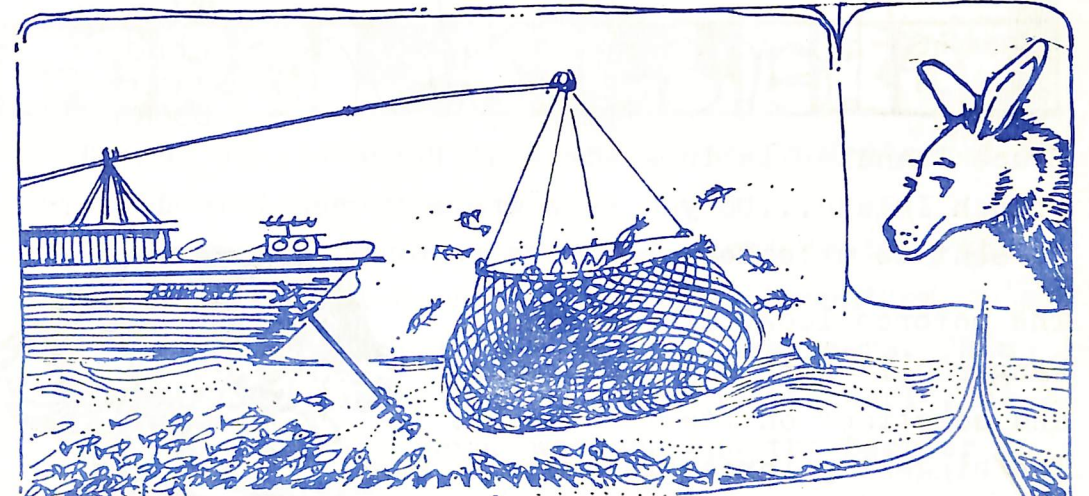
Somewhere I read  
of an invention that  
uses sound waves to  
attract certain  
kinds of fish



The sound travels through  
the water and the fish  
just cannot resist  
swimming towards it!  
Apparently different  
fish can be attracted  
by different sounds...  
SO...



Why not set up a factory on a barge pulled  
by a steamer and use this device to  
attract and catch the European Carp



Large nets could be used to capture the  
fish attracted to the boat and then  
haul them on board.



The fish  
could be  
canned and  
given to  
people in countries  
less fortunate than ours  
and the waste parts could  
be made into  
fertilizer for growing  
vegetables and crops



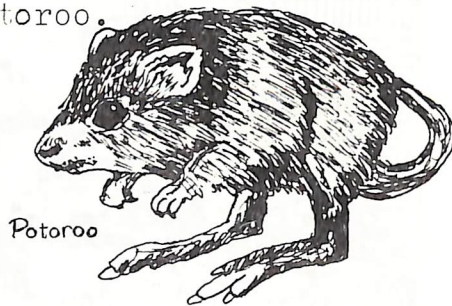
Then once again  
the cod and the  
redfin will swim  
in our lovely  
Murray River!

# Letters Galore

\*4 more children receive BOOK PRIZES!

Bruce Chandler is in grade 6 at Perseverance School on French Island...Do you know where French Island is ? He sent us a letter about the potoroo.

The potoroo looks like a small kangaroo. It hops on its back legs and sometimes on its front feet. The biggest potoroo discovered was 85cm long.



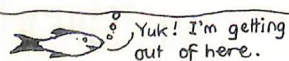
Potoroo

The habitat is mainly damp forest, with thick undergrowth, ferns and gumtrees. The potoroo makes a nest in a clump of grass.

Potoroos are night animals. They eat roots, grubs and beetles which they get out of the ground by making little holes with their nose.

Did you know that there are colonies of pot roos near Wilson's Promontory, Omeo and Warrnambool ? Do you know of any others ? Please write and tell us if you do.

Graeme Cox from Ringwood East likes to fish at Ringwood Lake. He wrote: "The Ringwood lake is a good place to study nature but the rubbish is piling up in the lake and on the ground. There are mainly carp and yabbies in the lake and my brother caught a fish with my friend's fishing rod.. I caught a lot of tiny fish in my net!"



Ringwood East P.S.

## CORAL-KILLER Children's LETTERS.

The Barrier Reef is in danger of being destroyed by the crown of thorn starfish.

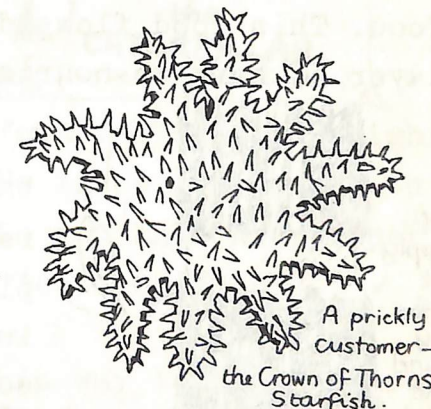
The crown of thorns starfish is slowly eating the beautiful, colorful coral and with the amount of starfish the coral will be gone in a few years. This will leave only six natural wonders of the world, as at present there are seven wonders and the Barrier Reef is one of them.

Malcolm Guest. Grade 6. Ringwood

It has been beaut to receive so much male mail, but it was great to get some "femail" - thank Lynne!

Lynne Robertson from Forest Hill also sent us some information about the crown of thorns starfish.

This starfish has been eating the Great Barrier Reef for fifteen years and is very hard to get rid of. About the only way to get rid of them is to spear them, but if it is only pierced it may not die. If they are chopped in half they can live on as two separate starfish.



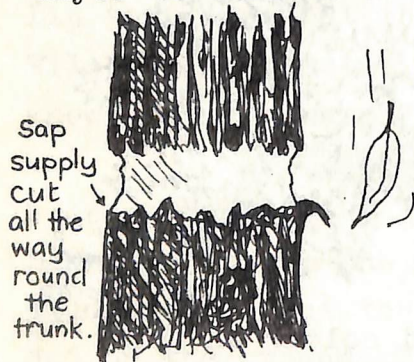
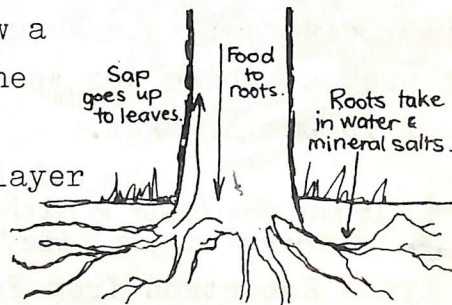
A prickly customer - the Crown of Thorns Starfish.

The crown of thorns is a rusty red colour and can have 12 to 19 arms. No fish will eat them because of their thorns. The Triton shellfish will eat them and there are hopes of breeding Tritons and releasing them on the starfish infested reefs.

# Dear Ass.Ed.??!

Gary Watson from Eastmont Primary School wrote asking "Why do trees die when ringbarked?".

To be able to understand why a tree dies when ringbarked you need to know how a tree lives. Sap is pulled up the tree by the evaporation on the leaves. It flows up through a layer of wood just below the bark. This layer is called sap wood. The action of sunlight and chlorophyll on the leaves turns the minerals and salts in the sap into plant food. This food flows down the tree through the inner layer of bark to nourish the roots.

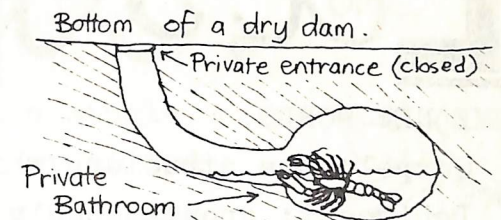


When a tree is ringbarked, a band of bark about 30cm. wide is removed. This means that the plant food's channel to the roots is cut. No food can reach them so they die. In turn no sap rises and so the whole tree dies.

\* \* \* \* \*  
From Heatherdale Primary School, came a question and also an answer from Catherine Campbell.

"How do freshwater yabbies survive when dams dry up?"

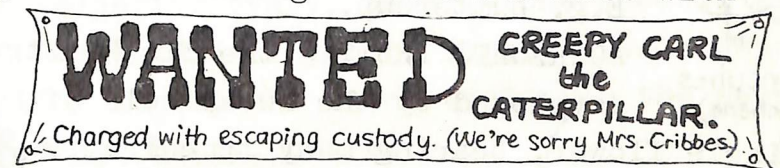
Specimens can survive the temporary drying up of such water bodies by sealing themselves in deep burrows ending in water filled chambers.



Catherine also answered our request for more information about yabbies. Here are some of the points she made.

- \* The proper name for a smooth freshwater crayfish or yabby is "Cherax Destructor".
- \* This species is widespread inland throughout south eastern Australia.
- \* It causes damage to dams and irrigation channels by perforating or undermining these structures with burrows.

## WHAT ?



"Carl" Caterpillar. A hairy fawn fellow with bright red tufts along his black back. He likes gum leaves to eat and can perform acrobatics. Do you know his proper name? Nature Notes wasn't able to identify him.

## WHERE ?

Somewhere in Melbourne, on his way to the Science Museum to be identified. Perhaps he enjoyed his train trip so much he stayed on to see more of the country.



# Let's Look at

## SOME NEW WORDS:

**Carpel:** the structure which bears the ovary.

**Dehiscent:** spontaneously opening at maturity.

**Indehiscent:** doesn't automatically open when it reaches maturity.

After the ovary of a flowering plant has been fertilized it develops into a fruit. The most important fruits are:



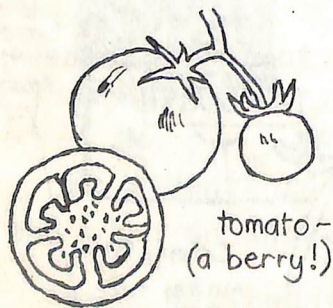
Ranunculus  
(an achene)

**ACHENE:** a dry, indehiscent, one-seeded fruit formed from a single carpel, and with the seed separate from the fruit wall.  
E.g. buttercup.

**AGGREGATE FRUIT:** the fleshy structure developed by the receptacle of a single flower, bearing many true fruits of the nature of achenes or drupes, each derived from a separate carpel. E.g. blackberry.



**BERRY:** a fleshy fruit without a stone, usually containing many seeds embedded in pulp.

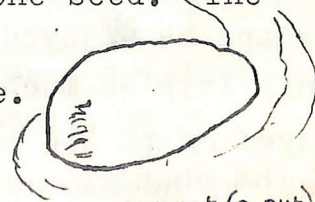


tomato -  
(a berry!)

E.g. red current, gooseberry.

**NUT:** a hard, dry, indehiscent fruit containing one seed. The shell is hard and the seed is inside.

E.g. hazelnut, coconut.



coconut (a nut).

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# Fruits.

PART ONE.

**LEGUME:** a fruit formed from a single carpel, splitting along the dorsal and ventral sutures and usually containing a row of seeds inside. E.g. peas & beans.



peas -  
legume



Apple - a pome.

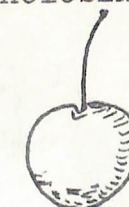
**POME:** a fleshy fruit containing a number of seeds inside a papery core formed from the inner walls of the carpels. E.g. apple, pear.



**DRUPE:** a succulent fruit formed from a superior ovary, usually one seeded, with an outside layer of fleshy tissue beneath

which is a stony layer, the stone enclosing the seed. E.g. plum, peach, cherry, olive.

**CAPSULE:** a dry, dehiscent fruit developed from a compound ovary in which each carpel splits along the carpellary septa (azalea), or in the middle of the carpels (lily), or by pores towards the top of the carpel (poppy), to release several seeds. E.g. banksia, hakea.



Cherry - a drupe.

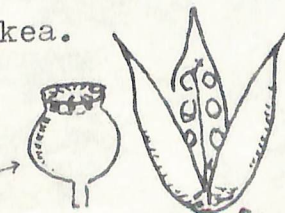


Woody capsule of Banksia



Woody capsule of Hakea

Poppy capsule



Lily capsule

# PUZZLES

Who am I?

1
2
3
4
5

My first is in king  
But not in queen,  
My next is in song,  
But not in seen.  
My third—and my last—  
Not in fist but in fast,  
And my fourth is the  
second in gleam.

Something's  
Fishy Avey!

AB, CD goldfish?  
MR no goldfish.  
SAR goldfish!  
RS, goldfish.

?

Q. What do you get when you cross a termite  
with a praying mantis?  
A. A bug that says grace before it eats your  
house!


HO AM I?

I like digging holes.

I am a marsupial because

I carry my baby in a pouch.

I have very strong claws, and

I am an Australian Native!

Sounds like a  
very intelligent  
animal to me!



1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

1. Graceful bird....  
(on the front page!)

2. Clean by rubbing.

3. Large monkeys.  
(Tarzan, King of the.....)

4. Birds' home.

This is a both-ways crossword!  
The answers are  
hidden somewhere  
in Nature Notes  
— Find them!

