

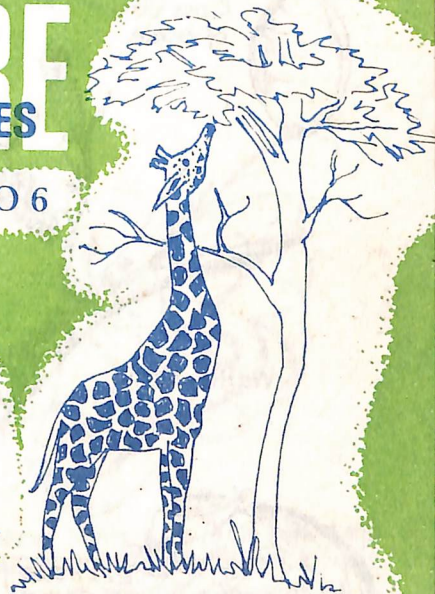
P.O. BOX 28.  
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3135.  
PH.879-1263.



# NATURE

## NOTES

VOL 13 NO 6



*Wilma Prohaski*



# NEST DIARY

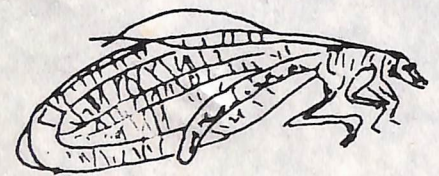
BIRD	DATE SEEN	NESTING MATERIAL	NO. OF EGGS/color.	DATE OF HATCHING.
Sparrow	3/8/76	grass & straw.	4 (brown)	4/1/77
Little Wattlebird	7/8/76	twigs.	2 (pink)	
Blackbird	1/9/76	mud and bark.		

NB: Don't in anyway touch or go too near the nest or there won't be a hatching!

# SPRING

The coming of spring in the Australian bush is not nearly as noticable as it is in colder climates where everything seems to stop for the freezing winter. However, there are some signs of the coming of warmer weather that you should start to notice around this time of year.

THE SUN & THE WEATHER: Are there more hours of sunlight each day? Are temperatures becoming warmer? Have your shadow-stick measurements changed in any way?

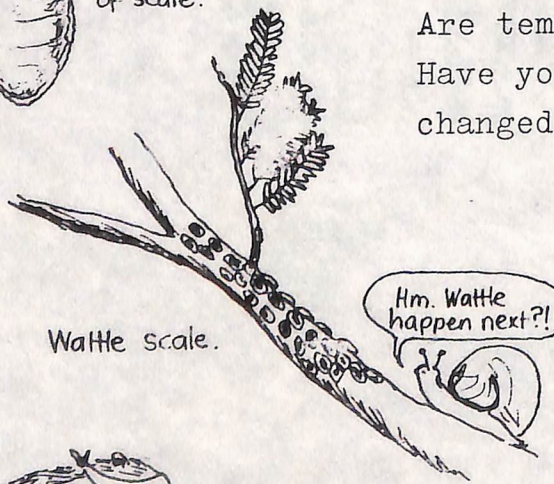


Lacewing (often found on Banksias)

Spring is a great time for spiders →



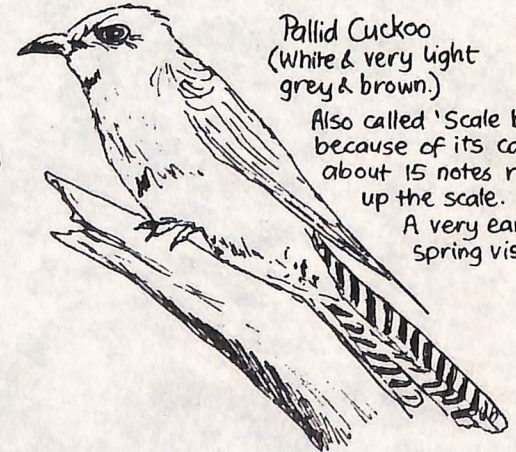
Close-up of scale.



Wattle scale.

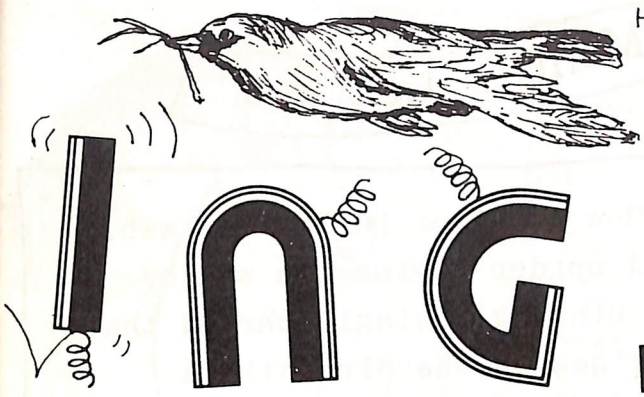


Erk! That front cover! Blue & green aren't fit to be seen. Hey what's this I'm tripping over?



Pallid Cuckoo (White & very light grey & brown.)

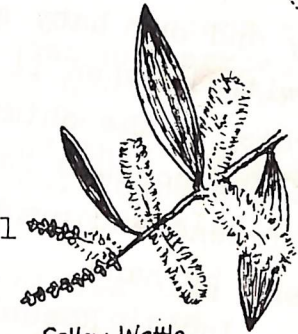
Also called 'Scale bird' because of its call of about 15 notes rising up the scale. A very early Spring visitor.



Hop Wattle, August to October. (Acacia stricta)



Early Nancy (Anguillaria dioica) White flower, pink dots.



'Pussy Willow.'

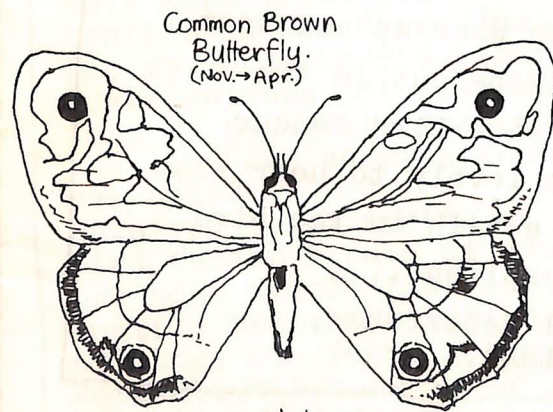
Sallow Wattle, Sept & Oct. (Acacia longifolia)

PLANT LIFE : Write down the dates on which you first see different plants bloom and trees blossom.

Color in the sketches on this page in the actual colors of the blooms.

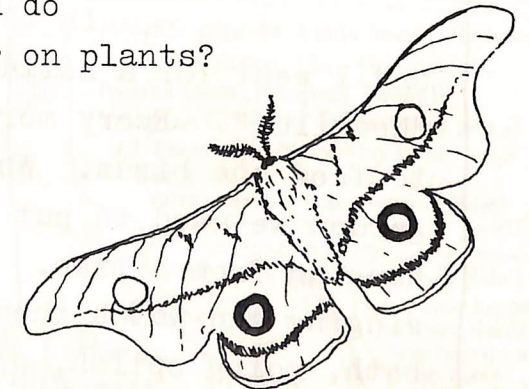
BIRDS : Have you noticed the arrival of any Pallid Cuckoos? When do the Blackbirds start singing again? Have you noticed any birds gathering material for nests?

INSECTS : Which butterflies and moths are the first to appear? When do aphids & scale start to appear on plants?



Common Brown Butterfly. (Nov. → Apr.)

Light brown edging, Yellow patches.



(Gum) Emperor Moth - in fact lays eggs on more than 30 different shrubs & trees most of them not natives - except of course the eucalypts from which it gets its name.





## this Month's Letters....

....plus a few from the month before! We get so many that we can't fit them all in - but these 4 lucky girls each win a book!

We have a possum in our chimney and our baby gets angry with it when it scratches on the chimney. One of the possums is my dad's friend and my dad feeds it by hand.

Judith Rossell,  
age 7, Eltham.

How a spider builds its web.  
A spider begins its web by spinning a single thread that rises in the air until a breeze catches it and entangles it on some obstruction. From this first foundation line other framework lines are attached to other supports and all these lines may be strengthened by guy lines.

Kerrie Wearmouth, 5G,  
Sth. Croydon.

Dear Nature Notes,

In the Easter holidays my family and I went for a holiday up to a farm called "Noorilum". Every morning we woke up and went to feed the birds. When we were out in the garden we used to put bread in a bird feeder hanging from a tree. It was lovely to hear them singing and watch them have a bath in the bird bath, going splish, splash, splish ....

from Nicol Robertshaw,  
Blackburn Lake.

Across: 1. legs; 3. ladybird; 4. dragonfly; 7. beetle; 9. ant; 10. spider; 11. bee; 12. fly; 13. wasp; 14. butterfly.

WOBBLEWORD = Africa

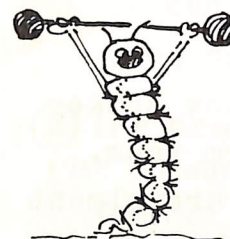


## HORSES -

There are many kinds of horses in the world today, bred for all sorts of jobs. Hunting, circus horses that entertain people, racing and polo horses. Some soldiers use horses and some farmers still use big horses for pulling their ploughs. Policemen all over the world use horses to control large crowds. In the Victorian Police Force there is a horse called Gendarme that carries the drum for the band on special occasions. More than 2,000 years ago, hunters rode bare-back with their bows and arrows hunting food. They were used to carry men into battle and to pull heavy cannons to the wars. In Switzerland they carry people in sleighs over the snow. Cowboys work with horses all day rounding up cattle for branding. Some of the colors of horses are: chestnut, palamino, painted horse or pinto.

Christine Jones,  
age 9, Ringwood East.

I'm training for  
the animal olympics  
on page 12!



NOTES ON LETTERS : We will have more about possums in next month's Nature Notes Judith. Did you know Kerrie, that some small spiders actually spin a sort of parachute that catches the wind and carries them to a new home?

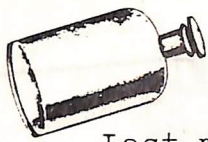
Have you tried making a bird feeder & bath at your own home Nicol? (See last month's Probe about bird puddings for feeding them.) More about horses later in the year Christine!

THANKS also to Linda Sewell, Rochelle Jackson, Karen, Paul Pavlinovich, Andrea Lewis, Meaghan Tempest, Vaughan Griffiths, Saiman and Ian of 4T Beaumaris & many others for your beaut letters. We will try to either answer them or print them!



If they didn't have such big page numbers, they'd be able to print more of these letters!





# Water



(cont.)

Last month we told you about four simple experiments with water which showed that:



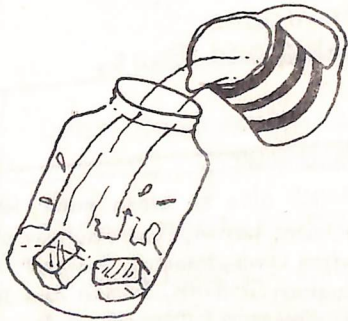
1. Water evaporates.
2. The more air that touches the water, the quicker it evaporates.
3. Wind carries water molecules away faster than still air does.
4. Molecules of water go into warm air faster than into cold air because warm air moves faster than cold air.



Now here's one more experiment for you to try:

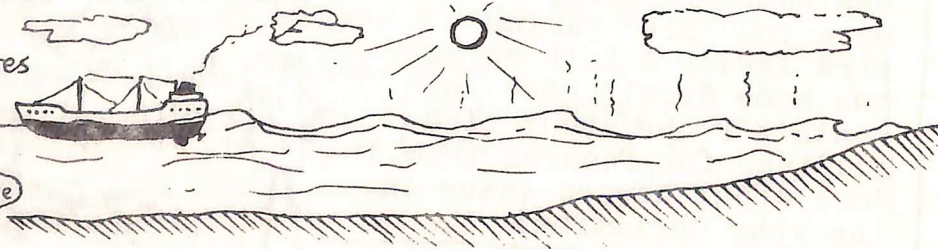
## EXPERIMENT FIVE :

Can water be taken out of the air again once it has evaporated away? Put some ice-cubes in a jar and pour some water on them. Now shake them around. In a warm room, little drops of water are almost sure to appear on the outside of the jar. These drops come from the water vapour in the air in a process called condensation.

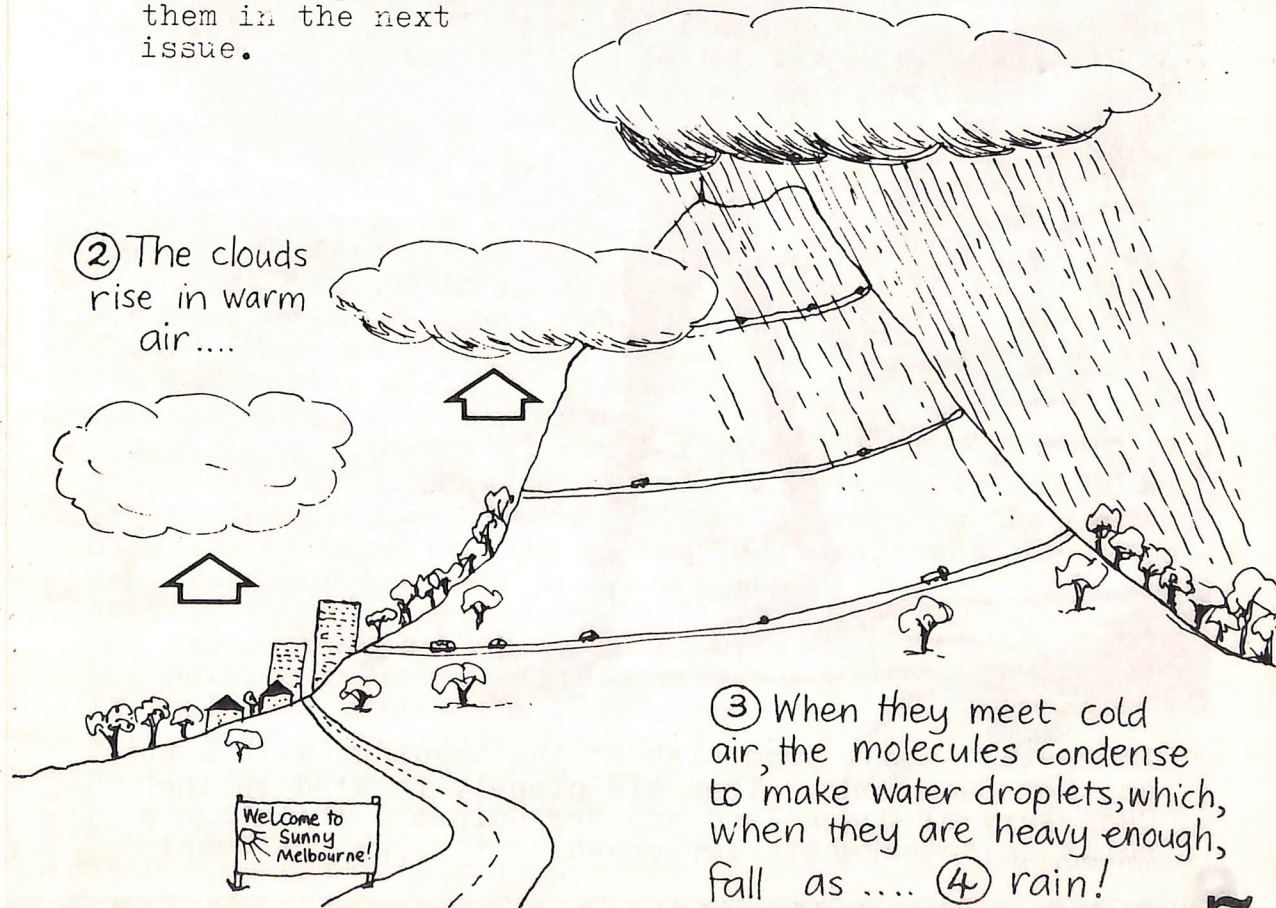


IN NATURE, ALL OF THESE FIVE PROCESSES OF EVAPORATION AND CONDENSATION MAY COMBINE TO GIVE US RAIN. Like this:

- ① Water evaporates to form clouds.



- ② The clouds rise in warm air....



- ③ When they meet cold air, the molecules condense to make water droplets, which, when they are heavy enough, fall as .... ④ rain!

by H.J. Lawry.

Well if this explains how rain falls, I wonder if you can work out how hailstones are formed?

What about snow?

Do mountains cause rain by pushing clouds higher into cold air?

Is the ocean necessary for rain to fall nearby?

Does this mean that all deserts are a long way from the sea?

Do trees help to bring rain?

See if you can find out the answers to these questions before we print some of them in the next issue.





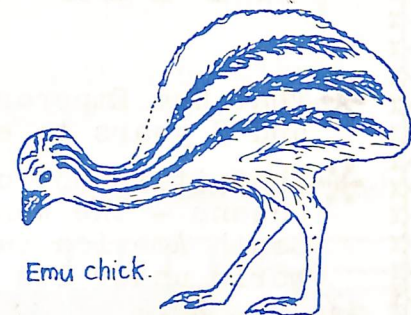
Emus stand about 90cm high at the shoulder with a neck another 60cm long. They are closely related to the Cassowary of Queensland and New Guinea - which has a built in "stack-hat" for crashing through the bush!

NATURE  
NOTES  
Aug '76.

# EMU

A WALKING RUBBISH BIN!

Emus aren't the prettiest of birds to look at and even though one appears on Australia's coat of arms, they aren't the most popular of birds either. You may have read recently of farmers in W.A. shooting thousands of the birds as they were forced south by a drought - well that's not the first time it has happened. In 1932 the Australian Army was called out to fight "The War of the Emus", but despite that - and the 300,000 birds that bounty hunters were paid to kill between 1945 and 1960 - the Emu continues to thrive on the mainland. Certainly they do eat wheat, but they are also the main eaters of the caterpillars that sometimes break out in plagues. So I hope the farmers of W.A. aren't successful in wiping out the Emus like the King Island Emu and the Kangaroo Island Emu were years ago. The Emu is the world's second largest bird (the Ostrich is bigger) and although it can't fly, they have been clocked at speeds of between 40 and 50 kmh. (No wonder they were put in the relay race in the Animal Olympics on page 12! No wonder they swallowed the baton too, for Emus are well known for their ability to eat almost anything!) The female Emu lays up to 15 eggs, but being a liberated female it is the male who spends the next nine weeks with very little food or water, hatching the eggs! The babies have an egg tooth to make their escape with, but they lose this soon after hatching.

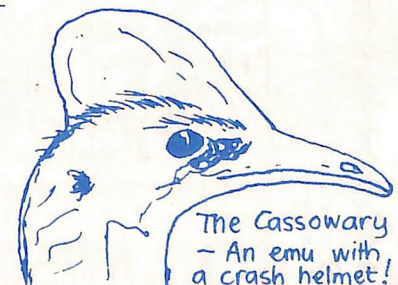


Emu chick.

(The G.T. Stripes down the side make excellent desert camouflage!)



Who needs a nest?



The Cassowary - An emu with a crash helmet!



# WOULD YOU BELIEVE?

- \* That Gum Emperor Moths can take between 4 weeks and 2 years to emerge from their cocoons.
- \* That it is not only birds that migrate across oceans - the Wanderer butterfly is a native of South America but has spread all around the world under its own steam.
- \* That Melbourne will have approximately 3 minutes of total darkness in the middle of Saturday afternoon on October 23rd this year - which will probably send wildlife to bed early! (More about this in our October eclipse edition.)
- \* That because a snake's teeth slope backwards, once it has started to swallow its prey it cannot disgorge it. So if two snakes fix on the same breakfast at the same time, the larger snake ends up by swallowing the other snake as well!
- \* That stranded whales may not die because of double pneumonia from temperature extremes or through collapsed internal organs because of lack of water support, but they may in fact get themselves stranded because they are already dying!
- \* That the original name given to Australia's strangest animal, Platypus anatinus (= flat-footed-creature, like-a-duck), is not its proper name, because the word platypus had already been used by another scientist to name a beetle. The other name given to the "platypus" by the second European scientist to be sent a skin in the late 18th century, was Ornithorhynchus paradoxus (= creature-with-a-bird's-beak, which-is-a-puzzle), but according to the rules for naming animals, the 'atinus' part of the first name must still be used. So the proper name for the "platypus" is Ornithorhynchus anatinus.



What a name! I can't even spell it myself.

## Riddles



If baby humans sleep in cots, what do baby Apes sleep in?

What animal at the North Pole has 2 humps?  
A lost camel.

What do 2-toed Sloths have that no other animal has?  
Baby 2-toed Sloths.

Apricots?



## Babies

Write down the names of the babies of each of these animals:

FROG

DUCK

GOOSE

HORSE

SWAN

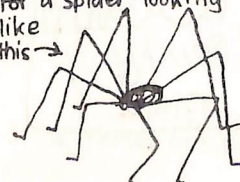
KANGAROO

CAT

DOG

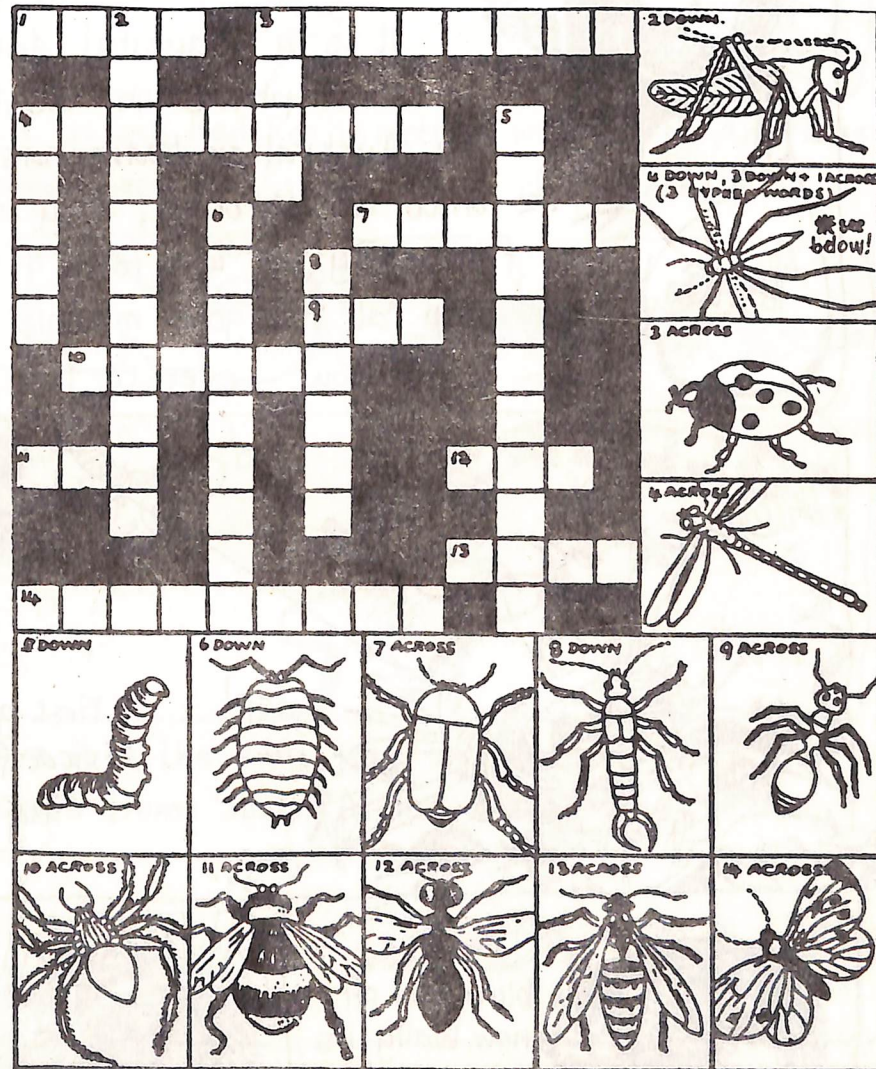
COW

The common name for this insect is also given for a spider looking like this



## Insects

Answers hidden - of course!



From Peal Picture Crosswords  
Pealpress, Glasgow.



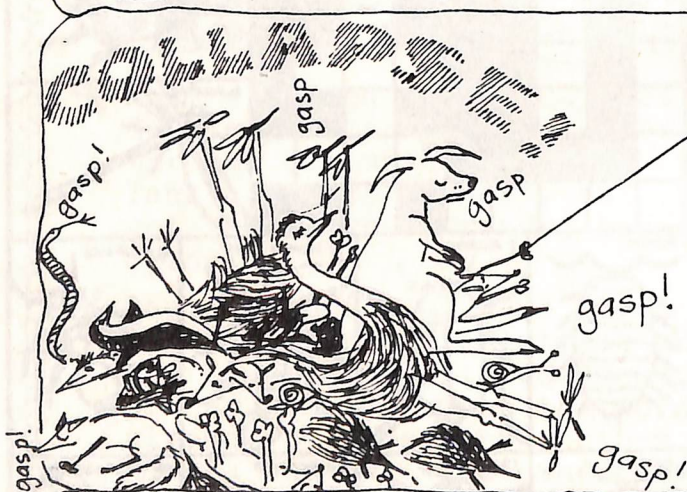
# 7 CONTINENTS & 2 OCEANS BATTLE IT OUT AT THE FIRST... ANIMAL OLYMPICS

Hey mate! You're not a crow - you're a raven mad!



Hi Folks! C.C. Crow here at the Finals of the Animal Olympics - It is a beautiful day and the atmosphere is electric!! ....

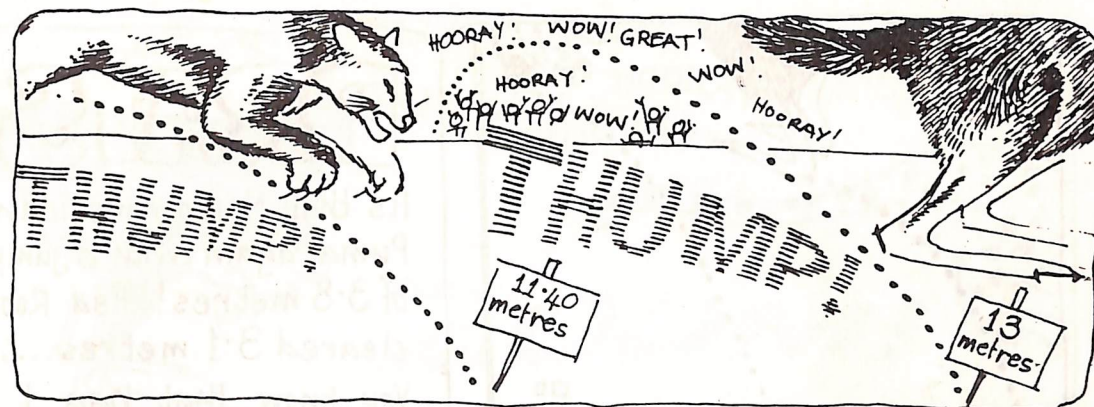
The Australian team has just come on to the ground, they all look very fit. - By the way folks this large bag is to keep all the gold medals safe! Right now - over to the track...



First goes to Africa for a great Tug-o-war!



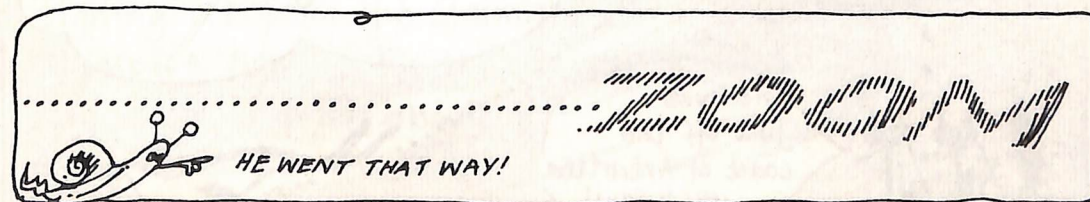
Take the blind fold off now Wally its race time!



Heh Heh! that's the way Red Roo, 13 metres with North Americas Puma in second place with a long jump of 11.4 metres! \*



I dont believe it!! the emu has swallowed the baton! so the ostriches from South Africa have won!

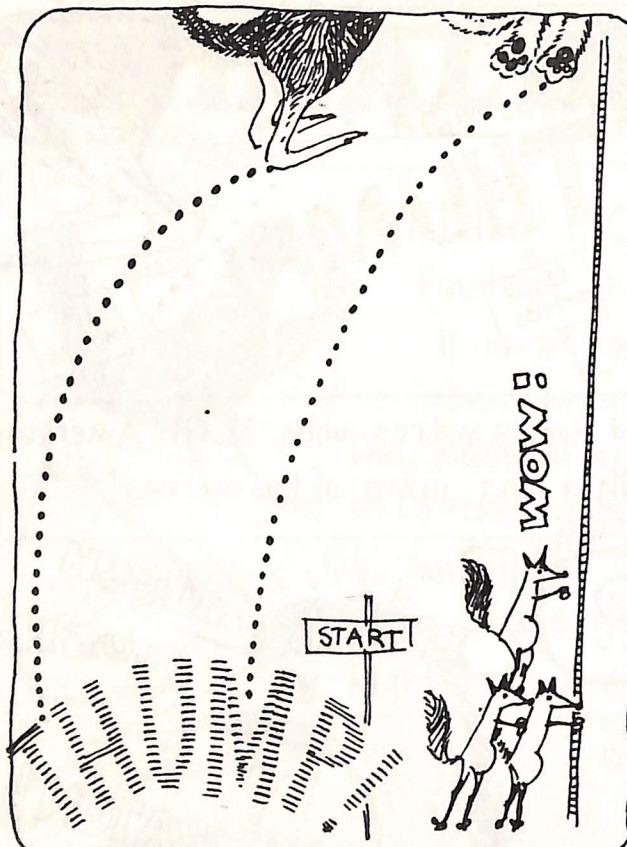


Wow! the 100 kilometre flying race has been won by a Swift with the fantastic speed of 320 kilometres an hr. \* Horses can jump 13.50m - but we class them as professionals!

Across: 1. legs; 3. ladybird; 4. dragonfly; 7. beetle; 9. ant; 10. spider; 11. bee; 12. fly; 13. wasp; 14. butterfly.

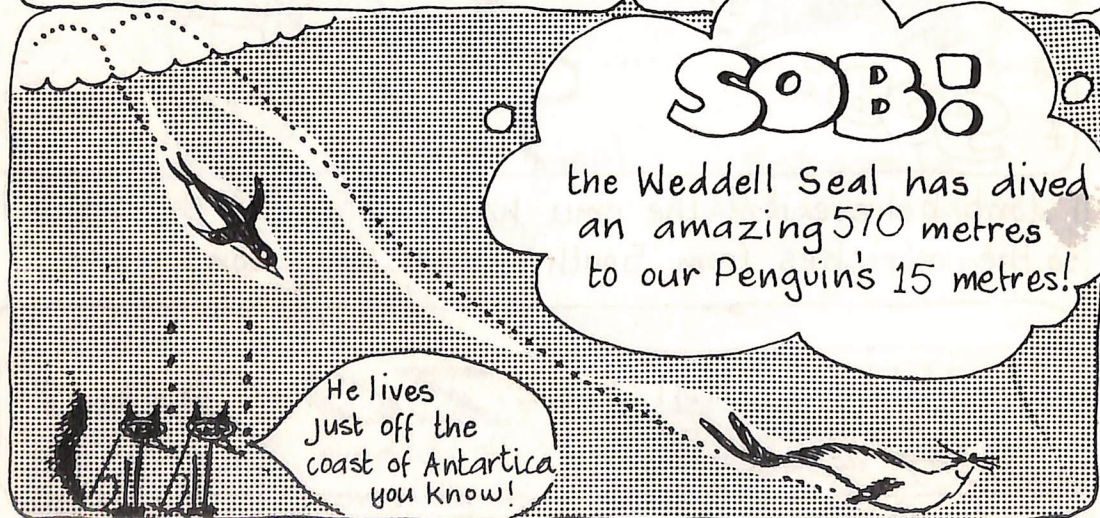
WOBBLERWORD = Africa





# DRATS!

It's that North American Puma again with a jump of 3.8 metres! Red Roo cleared 3.1 metres.... You know that bag I showed you folks, well-heh-heh- it's actually to sit on—not for the gold medals! heh-heh Well over to the deep diving pool now! Just watch the pride of Philip Island.....



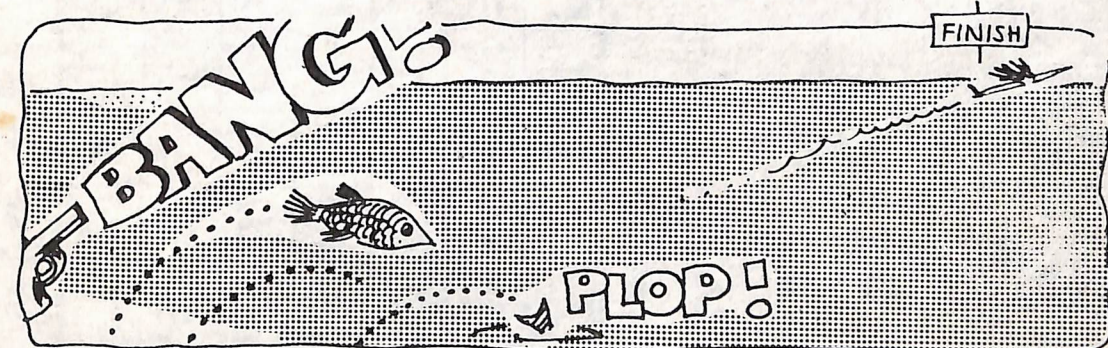
# SOB!

the Weddell Seal has dived an amazing 570 metres to our Penguin's 15 metres!

He lives just off the coast of Antarctica you know!



The African cheetah wins the 100 metres dash with the sizzling speed of 115 kilometres an hour\*! Our Kangaroo was second with 75 kilometres an hour.



Amazing! the Sail Fish (from off the coast of Mexico) has swum the 1500 metres at 110 kilometres an hour – what a swim!

This is C.C. (SOB!) Crow signing off from the Animal Olympics now! By the way, crows fly at about 40 kilometres an hour – so I will soon be home – Thank Heavens!



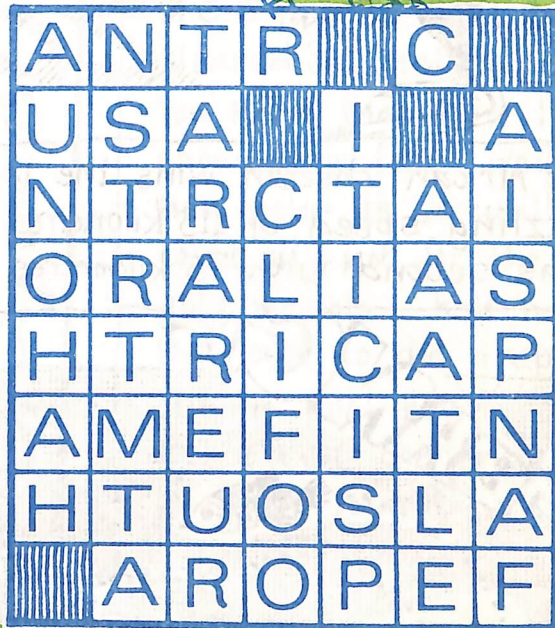
\* Man's top speed is about 36 to 40 kilometres/hour.



# PUZZLES

## Wobbleword!

In this word staircase you will find the names of the continents and two oceans. Color each name in a different color as you find them. The letters that are left over give the name of the winner of the Animal Olympics! Letters may be in more than one word, but the words only go horizontally, vertically backwards or forwards - NOT diagonally!



Where's the paintbrush, Wally?

It sure does James.

## Riddles..

- Q. What happened to the hen that swallowed a yo-yo?  
A. It laid the same egg three times!
- Q. What side of an alligator is greenest?  
A. The outside.
- Q. Why are rats and mice unhappy in bad weather?  
A. Because it might rain cats and dogs.
- Q. Why did the dog turn round and round before it lay down?  
A. Because it was a watch-dog and had to wind up.
- Q. How many hairs in a possum's tail?  
A. None. The hairs are on the outside!

Send your puzzles/letters/riddles to us!