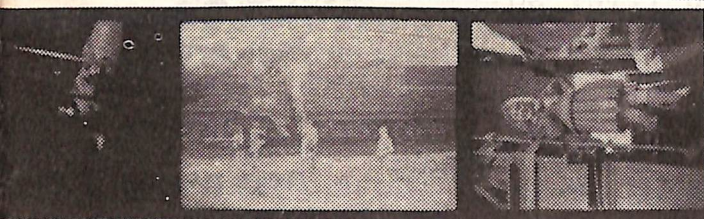
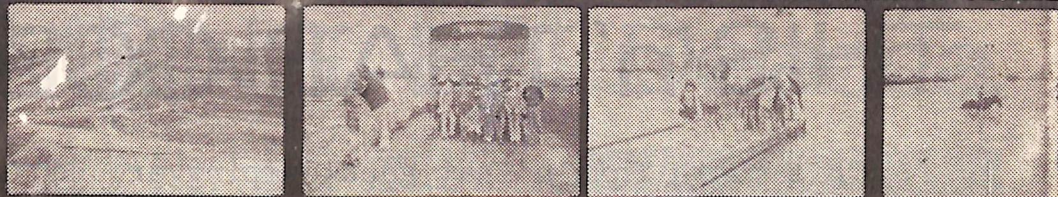
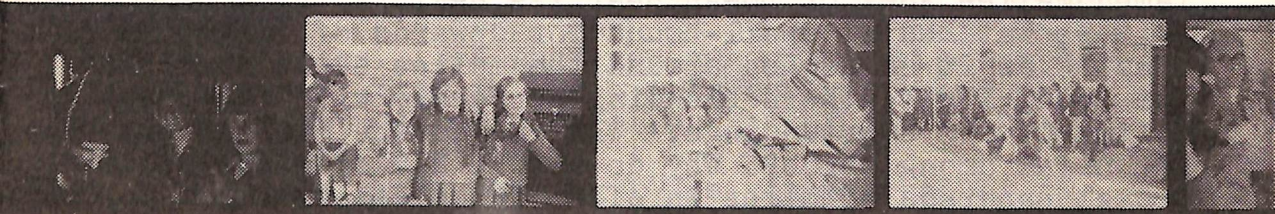


Vol.13,
No.9.



NATURE NOTES



SCHOOL CAMPS

THIS'n'THAT GOES

This month This'n'That goes camping around Victoria. While we are camping we will look at some of the special wonders of nature that we may find at each particular spot.

Last year about 80 girls and boys from my school at Greenhills camped in the Wyperfeld National Park in north-east Victoria. Whilst there we saw many excellent examples of native flora and fauna. The bird life, so different to that around Melbourne, held everybody's attention right from the start, but the most exciting moment came when we (another teacher, some children and myself) were privileged to have an uninterrupted view of the famed Mallee Fowl or Lowan near its nest.

We watched it spell-bound for upwards of fifteen minutes as it scratched around the mallee scrub searching for food, its feathers blending perfectly with the bush litter of its surroundings. What makes the mallee fowl so unique among birds? Why do people all over Australia travel hundreds of miles in often fruitless attempts to catch a glimpse of this bird? The children in our group were anxious to find out and many strange facts came to light following their investigations. See what you can find out about our bird with the built-in thermometer. If you visit Wyperfeld you may see one if you follow these simple rules:

- (a) first find the mound,
- (b) rise early,
- (c) wear drab clothing, and
- (d) learn to be very quiet over a long period.

When you are on your camp you may have a chance to see some nocturnal animals. Most common of these are the members of the possum family. Possums are all quite harmless unless you try to catch one - then you really have trouble on your hands. When you look for possums you will need a strong torch, very quiet voices and a dark night.



Brush-tailed Possum.
(See N.N. Vol. 13. No. 7. for more)

CAMPING. by L. Delacca.

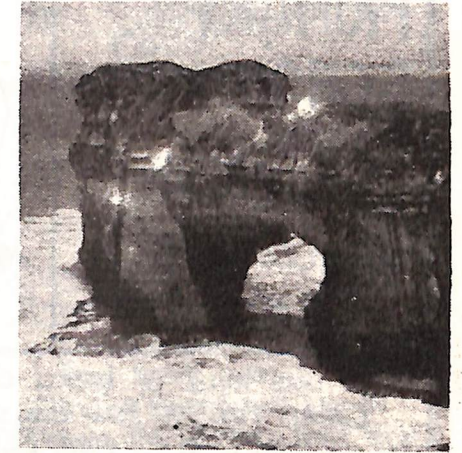
Why not do a project on possums? Find out about their prehensile tail, the beautiful glider family, their marsupial breeding habits and their way of life.

Many school camps visit the Port Campbell National Park - and what a wealth of nature there is to see there! For a start there is Mutton-bird Island - just a stone's throw from the mainland. Here hundreds of Mutton-birds breed in the season between about now and April, and you can see them return from feeding every night at sunset.

Penguin rookeries are also to be found here, as are the spectacular rock stacks known as London Bridge and the Twelve Apostles. See what you can discover about this exciting area, rich in Victoria's early history - especially with shipwrecks like that of the Loch Ard off the rugged coastline.

On some of your camping tours you may see at an entrance to a special area, a large sign with an ibis painted on it. When you see this symbol you will know that the area you are in is a State Sanctuary and that all its inhabitants are strictly protected. Two of our sanctuaries may be found in the north of Victoria - one near the Murray River between Gunbower and Cohuna, and another near Kerang. The former is Kow Swamp and the latter Reedy Lakes and both are sanctuaries for wounded birds during the duck-shooting season. If you visit these sanctuaries you can be sure you will see plenty of water-bird life.

Other popular camping spots around Victoria include the Grampians (SEE NATURE NOTES Vol. 12 No. 6.), the Victorian Alps and Wilson's Promontory. For a map of these beautiful places and some short notes on what to look for, see page 15.

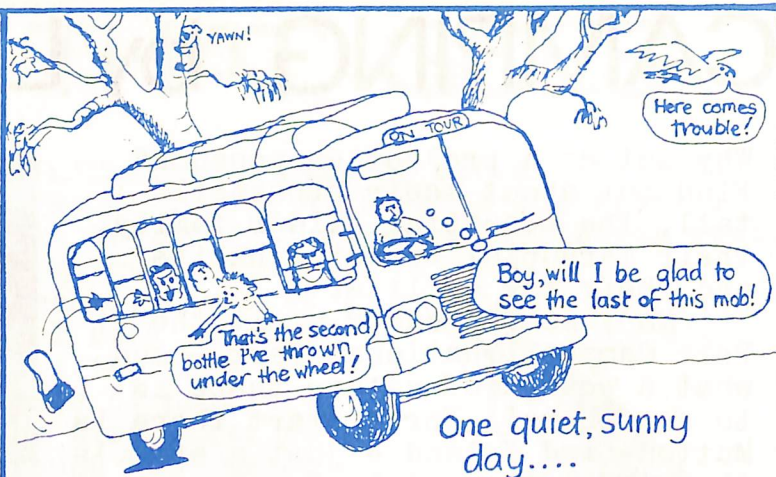


Island Arch - Port Campbell Nat. Park.



Glossy Ibis

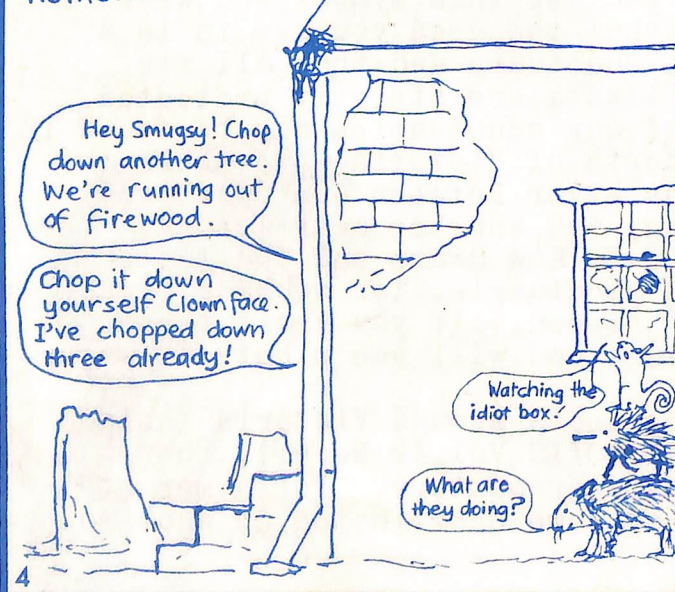
LOUDMOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL VISITS Mountain Holiday Camp



...a bus-load of lucky children arrived at the Mountain Holiday Camp for a few days to investigate the bush.



They soon made themselves feel quite at home.....



...much to the discomfort of the local inhabitants!



*SEE PAGE 13 FOR HOW YOU SHOULD WATCH BIRDS!

In fact, the animals were so upset that they held a big Conference around the Fallen Log:



*Old Ned could not say anything because he had a hoarse voice!

They spent many hours trying to work out how to help the children want to understand wildlife - but eventually decided that children that thoughtless and rowdy didn't even deserve to see any. So they gave up....

...and eventually a course of action was decided on for that night....



...which had the desired effect the following morning.





Annette & Shayne, your book prizes will arrive eventually!

this Month's Letters....

You don't have to go away on a camp to have an enjoyable and worthwhile time. We received a whole stack of letters from Greenhills P.S. after their visit to the Museum. Here is one of them, plus an excellent letter from Shayne of Knoxfield P.S.

THE VISIT TO THE MUSEUM

We arrived at the museum in a small bus with 20 seats (21 including the bus driver's). Two grown ups went with us, Mr. Weight and Mrs. Johnson. Then we went and put our bags on a shelf near the counter. Then we went and had a look at two Aboriginal displays near the main entrance. Mr. Weight called us back to him to meet a man called Mr. Miller. Mr. Miller was to show us the Museum. Well, first we had a look at some stuffed animals, and then moved through a hallway into another room to look at more Aboriginal displays. Mr. Miller showed us some weapons, food and tools. We then looked at some slides about some tribes. We were allowed to have another look around. Mr. Miller opened a glass case and Samantha said to me: "Look at that spear in the glass case." I did and Samantha went behind the case and the spear went up and down. I went around the back and I saw that a piece of wire made it move. I spent 10c on a photo of the horse called Phar Lap. He was killed in a Night Raid*.

By Annette Paradies, 5L.

Super word
Ans.
NESTLES
ENTRANT
STRANGE
TRAITOR
ANTERN
STEL
GEORGE
STERNER

Can you help?
Let us know if you can.

WANTED

SILK WORMS
for
breeding
by
Wendy Harris
Grade 3
Blackburn East P.S.

* Thanks Annette. What you said about the 'Night Raid' had me puzzled. I thought perhaps you were mixed up with Nightshade (a poisonous plant) or a Nitrate poison, as Phar Lap died after eating poisonous weed it is thought. But your Principal tells me that the notice under Phar Lap reads: Phar Lap, died in America. By Night Raid, out of Which means Night Raid was his father!



The head of the Perentie. They can grow over 2m long (8ft). They rarely travel far from their rocky hideouts.

Mr. Johnson, girls and boys. This morning for show and tell, I'd like to show you my pet monitor, or goanna.



Hm. Must be a blackboard monitor!

* There are many myths about how a bite from a Goanna or a Blue-tongue will get re-infected every year (or seven years) at the same time as it was originally inflicted. This no doubt came from the fact that goannas often have rotting meat in their teeth which leads to infection and a wound that is difficult to heal.

MONITORS by Shayne Kennedy.

A monitor and a goanna are the same kind of animal. Monitors can swim, run quickly, climb, bite* and hit with their tail. They will climb any vertical object such as man, cows, tree stumps and trees.

Food: Its diet consists of snakes, lizards, birds and bird's eggs. It locates prey mainly by scent. Prey is swallowed whole and not chewed up. They can grow over two metres long!

Description: Long tail, snake-like form in the body with a long flattened head. It also has long claws.

Common Goanna: Monitors are found in Africa, Asia and Australia. They are the closest living relatives of the dinosaur. The name 'goanna' is used only in Australia and comes from the word iguana, a type of dragon living in America. The common goanna lives in all states except Tasmania.

Gould's Monitor: or Sand Goanna, is similar to the Common Goanna or Lace Monitor. It lives in dry, sandy areas.

The Perentie: is the largest Australian lizard and is colored dark brown to black with rows of yellow spots across its back. It is found in the desert regions of central and northern Australia.

Wombats



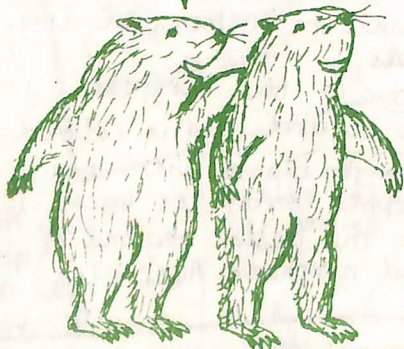
COMMON WOMBAT
Naked nose, coarse hair, short ears — rounded. Lives in a large burrow. NSW, Vic. & a near relative in Tasmania.



HAIRY-NOSED WOMBAT
Silky hair, sharper ears. Hairy nose. Lives in a warren. Sth. Aust. and across Nullabor into W.A.

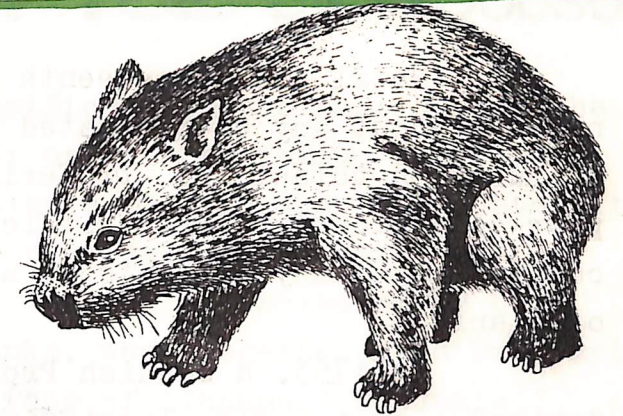
Two rare species of Wombats are found in Queensland.

The Wimbats of Wombledon Common are we!



Wombats are closely related to Koalas and are something like the American Beaver. They are marsupials but have teeth like rodents that keep on growing. Thus they must keep on grinding and chewing to wear them down to a comfortable length. Wombats like to feed on grasses, bark, roots of shrubs and trees, some fungi and vegetables. In captivity they will also eat peanuts, sultanas, biscuits and cake. They drink very little. An orphaned wombat demands a lot of attention — more than a Joey — and must be bottle fed. But they are a most affectionate animal and will

jump on your lap to be patted. Being short-sighted they also learn to follow closely on your heels. They grow up to 1.2 metres long and weigh up to 40kg, and are so solid that even being run over by a car on the open road does not always kill them outright, but leaves them to a painfully slow death. Although many have found them wonderful pets, they can never be cured of their desire to dig (why go round a fence when you can dig under it?!) — and it is especially wise to let them go during the breeding season, although they will often return later of their own accord. Female wombats give birth to one baby a year if there is enough food around, the male wombat being told to clear out when the baby is born. The baby wombat stays in its mother's pouch (which opens backwards) for about 2 or 3 months.



THE AGE, Monday, October 18, 1976
REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION.

The wombat gets a lift in status

By TIM COLEBATCH, our Environment Writer

After 70 years of indignity as officially designated vermin, things are looking up for Victoria's wombats.

The chairman of the Vermin and Noxious Weeds Destruction Board, Mr. Geoff Douglas, told a forum on Saturday that wombats could now look forward to "a beneficial change of status".

He said the wombat's status as "vermin" — a title it has held since 1906 — had been reviewed by the board and the Fisheries and Wildlife Division.

"I think it can look forward to a beneficial change of status —

except in the areas where it's a pest," he said.

"It seems to me the poor old wombat's been the meat in the sandwich, between the farmers and the rabbits.

"It appears that a more sensible and acceptable philosophy for wombat management is evolving in society."

Wombats have been in trouble with the law for 70 years in Victoria because of their ability to

break through rabbit-proof fences and open holes for the rabbits.

In 1925 a ten shilling bounty was placed on their heads, and for years thousands of pounds were paid out annually to wombat-killers.

The bounty was suspended in 1966 and abolished in 1971.

Mr. Douglas said the board's present policy was "to remove offending wombats" and leave the rest alone.

He also foreshadowed changes

in the status of dingoes — the other native animal still on the list of declared vermin.

"In the future the dingo may well have a different status and role," Mr. Douglas said.

"It may surprise many people that there are more sheep killed in western Victoria each year by town and farm dogs — there are virtually no dingoes in western Victoria — than in the eastern highlands, where sheep losses from dingoes are supposed to be significant."

The forum was organised by the Natural Resources Conservation League.

This may even cause me to revise my classification of humans!

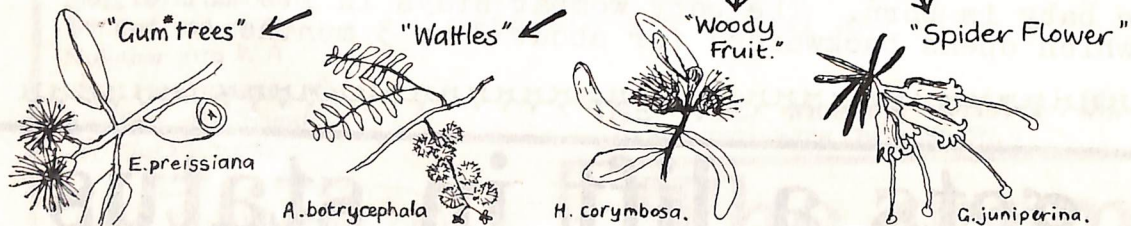


Proper Names For Plants by D.Dobson

Until the seventeenth century, plants had been named without any co-ordinated system of classification by European botanists. Differing ideas, languages, and poor communication posed difficult problems and created confusion in many attempts at a scientific classification of plants.

In 1753, a Swedish Professor, Carl Linnaeus, devised a system for classifying and naming plants, both those known and those yet to be discovered. He used Latin (the lingua franca of the day) and Greek to give the plants a two-part name. The first part is called the "generic" (or family) name of the species.

Eg. Eucalyptus, Acacia, Hakea, Grevillea.

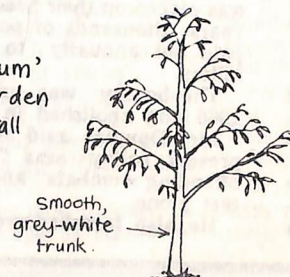


The second part is usually a descriptive name describing some characteristic peculiar to the plant.

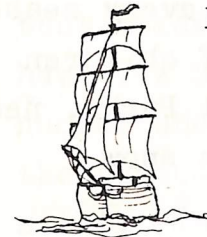
Eg. Eucalyptus citriodora - the second name referring to the lemon-scented leaves of this particular species.

*Sir Joseph Banks first used the term 'gum tree' in 1770 at Botany Bay. Today, now that around 500 eucalypts are known of, the words 'gum tree' are usually used only for those with smooth bark.

The 'lemon-scented gum' is a very popular garden tree because of its tall and slender shape. It can grow up to 30m. tall!



In many cases this specific or second name honors the discoverer of the plant or another famous person. However, the name is always Latinised so as to end with a, i, us, es, um, is, or something similar.



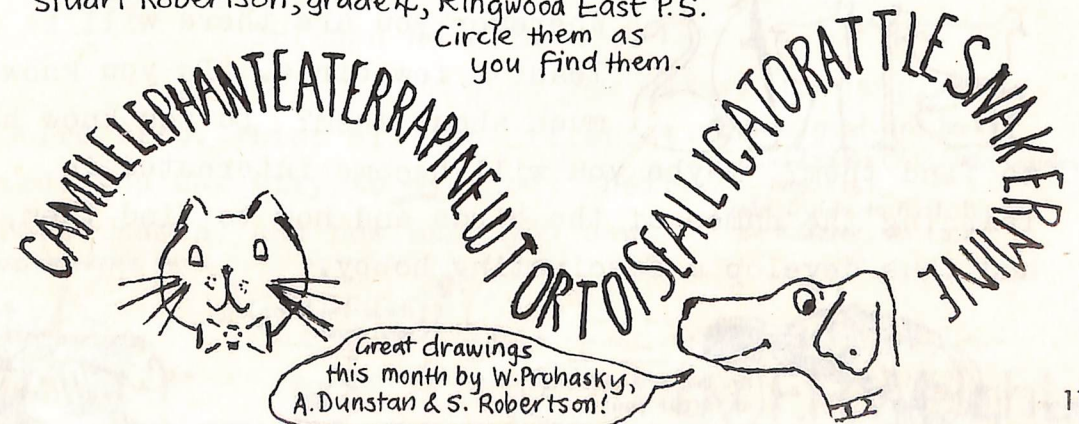
Eg. Grevillea banksii was named after Sir Joseph Banks, who, together with Dr. Carl Solander (one of Linnaeus' students) collected many botanical specimens along the east coast of Australia on Captain Cook's first voyage in the "Endeavour".

Linnaeus' method of botanical recording and classifying ended confusion and made botanical exploration worthwhile. His system inspired the eager botanists to search for and discover many new species in lands all around the world.



There are 10 animals hidden in this puzzle which was drawn by Stuart Robertson, grade 4, Ringwood East P.S.

Circle them as you find them.



Great drawings this month by W. Prohasky, A. Dunstan & S. Robertson!

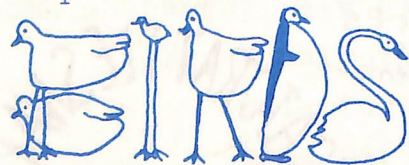
So you're going on a Camp? Wow!



Over the years thousands of children have gone camping to all sorts of places and in every season of the year. Groups of children have camped in National Parks, near rivers, by the sea, near lakes, in forests, in snow country - in fact, just about everywhere.

As a teacher, I have taken hundreds of children on these different sort of camps. Whilst I know that the children have had a great time, I feel that many children would have greater enjoyment and learn more if they knew how to observe things. There are many experiences children could have which may lead to a life-long interest.

I would like to show one way by which you could learn more from your next camp. Every camp area has at least one thing in common:



Wherever you are there will be at least a few birds. Do you know much about them? Do you know how to find them? Maybe you will become interested in learning the names of the birds and how to find them, and thus develop a fascinating hobby.

BIRD OBSERVING

At camp, decide on a set path that you will walk each day at the same time. (Before breakfast is best, and again at sundown.) Casually walk the path wearing dull clothes that don't flap. KEEP QUIET. Move in small groups, carry a small pad, pencil and, if possible, a pair of binoculars. The best birdwatching binoculars should have 7 X 50 printed on them. The first number should never be bigger than 8 as the binoculars are too hard to hold still. Make sure that you have the necessary permission for your walk!



Keep a list of birds you see. Write a description of them. Give each bird a name (even if you make it up) so that you can check it later. Count the birds like this - write the number of the same sort of bird you see each time beside its name, and if there are 10 or more, circle that number. When you get home add them up.

Eg.	Starling	3	2	1	8	16	4	12	= 46
	Magpie	1	2	3	1	4	5		= 14
	Crimson Rosella	1	2	1					= 4

When you return to camp, make a bird list. List all the different birds you saw (try to find out their proper names) and how many you saw.

* Some good bird books:
 Gould League (Vic) Field Guides.
 Nos. 1 to 6.
 Field Guide to Aust. Birds.
 by P. Slater, Vol. 1 & 2.



by F.R. Weight. 13



Outdoor Games

School Camps are a great opportunity for playing outdoor games that can't normally be played in crowded areas. Here are two beauties - try them!

1. dune creeping (or lantern stalking)

Needed: A colored light/torch to mark home base.
At least one powerful torch.
A dark night and sand dunes or bush.
At least 10 people.

Rules: Set up home base on a hill or tree stump and appoint at least one spotter with a powerful torch. Everyone else has two minutes to hide and then try to creep back to home base without being spotted.

I spy, with my little eye,
WALLY WOMBAT!

Rats!
This game is torcher!

If the spotter does see someone, then they call out the person's name or the color of their jumper and that person is out.

The first person safely home can be the next spotter.
A time limit can be put on each game & 3 whistle blasts used to finish it.

2. Storming the heights

Needed: 2 clearly marked areas of bush or sand-dunes.
2 teams with a flag each.
Lots of easy-to-break wool in 2 colors.
A time-keeper, whistle-blower with a note pad & pencil.

Rules: Each team secretly plant their flag in their own area. It must be visible for 3m all around (ie. it can't be buried.) Every person must have wool tied around each arm (different color for each team) on the outside of their clothes and up high on the arm. When the game starts, it is the object of each team to capture the other team's flag. Guards may be left around the flag. However, if a person has one piece of wool pulled off their arm they are "injured" and must report to the hospital for 5 minutes. If 2 pieces of wool are pulled off, they are "dead" and out of the game. Only 1 piece of wool may be pulled off at a time. The pieces of wool are kept by the time-keeper so that if the flags aren't found, the team with the least number of pieces of wool taken from them is the WINNER!

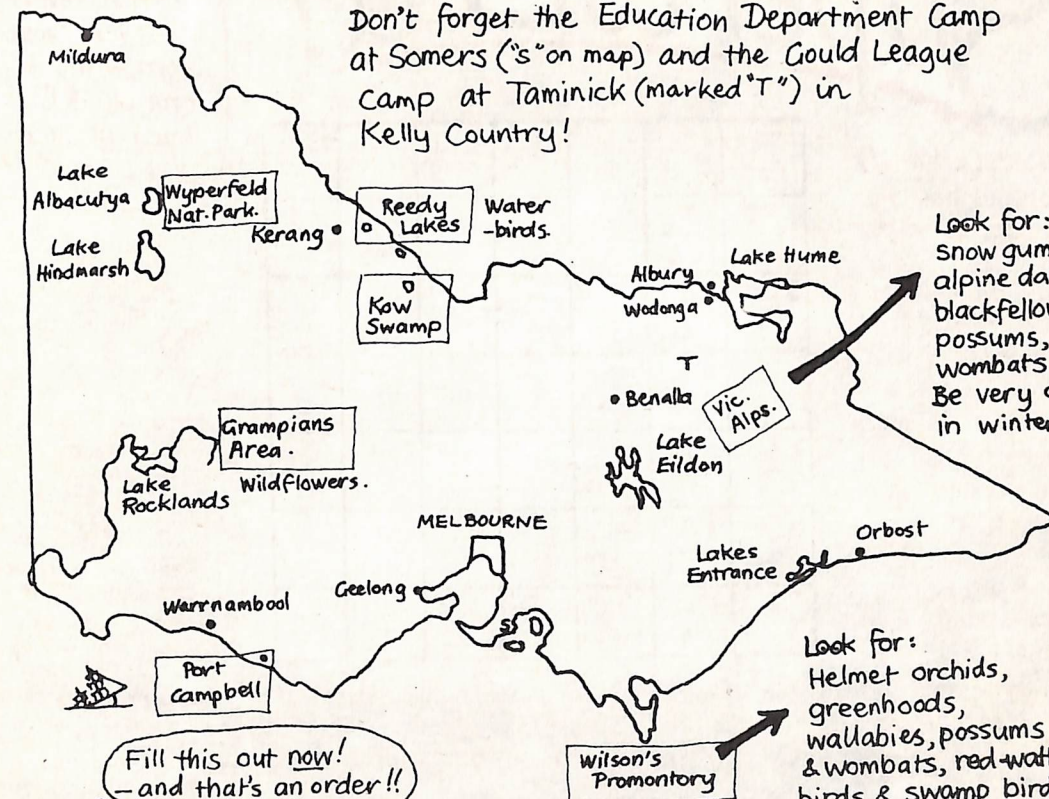
Hey, come out. I want to take your wool off you!

Not by the hair of my chinny chin chin.



some favorite Victorian camping areas...

Don't forget the Education Department Camp at Somers ('s' on map) and the Gould League Camp at Taminick (marked 'T') in Kelly Country!



Look for:
Snow gums,
alpine daisies,
blackfellow's yam,
possums,
wombats.
Be very careful in winter!!

Look for:
Helmet orchids,
greenhoods,
wallabies, possums
& wombats, red-wattle-birds & swamp birds.

Fill this out now!
-and that's an order!!

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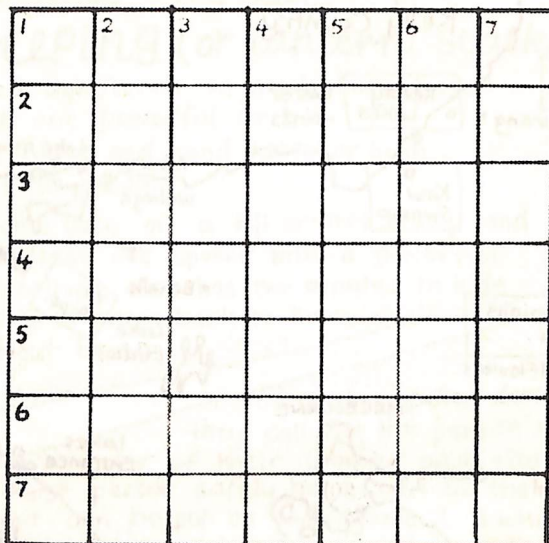
10 issues of each magazine again in 1977.

Superword!

WOW! A seven by seven cross-word without one blank!! I must get my dictionary out!



From: "Oddities & Curiosities of Words & Literature" by C.C. Bombaugh & M. Gardner. (A Dover book.)



ACROSS (& DOWN!)

1. When she has laid the eggs a mother bird ----- down on them to hatch them.
2. Wally Wombat was an ----- in the Animal Olympics.
3. The 'platypus' is a very ----- animal.
4. A ----- is someone who betrays their own country.
5. Many years ago, people would light a ----- instead of switching on the electric light.
6. When playing with large pythons, one must be careful that they don't crush and e----- you!
7. The teacher your parents had was probably s----- than the one you have now (believe it or not!)

anagrams - made by rearranging the letters in a word or a phrase.

punishment = nine thumps!

The eyes = they see.

one hug = enough.

Spring, summer, autumn, winter = "Time's running past," we murmur.

Nature Notes = True, no teas'n'!

The countryside = no city dust here!

elephant = Make up your own anagrams!

palindromes - words or sentences that read the same backwards!

Eg. Was it a rat I saw? Ten animals I slam in a net! Do not start at rats to nod. A man, a plan, a canal - Panama!

Can you make up some palindromes? (Words like madam, noon, step, stops, etc. are very handy for sentences.)

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