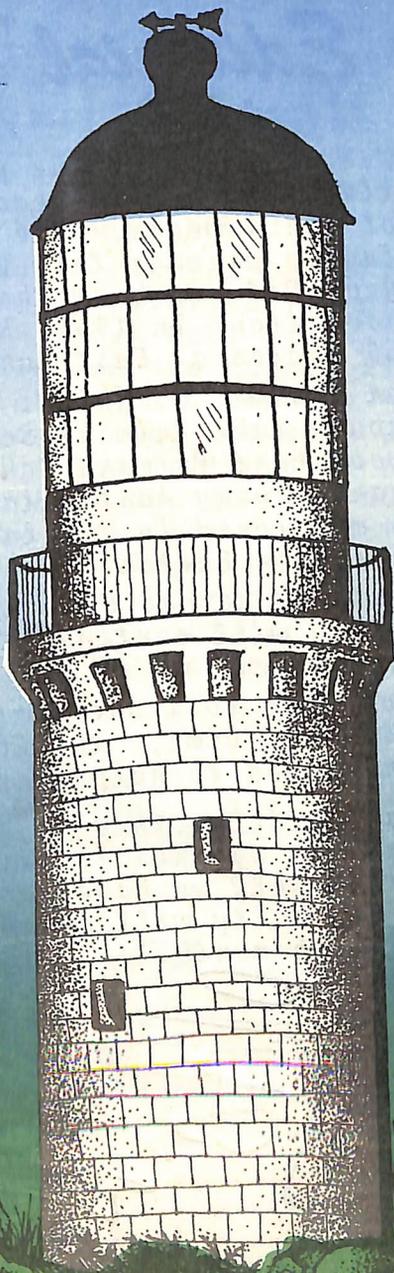


# nature notes

PO. BOX 28,  
RINGWOOD EAST,  
3135.

PH. 879-1263.

vol. 16 no. I



# Editorial



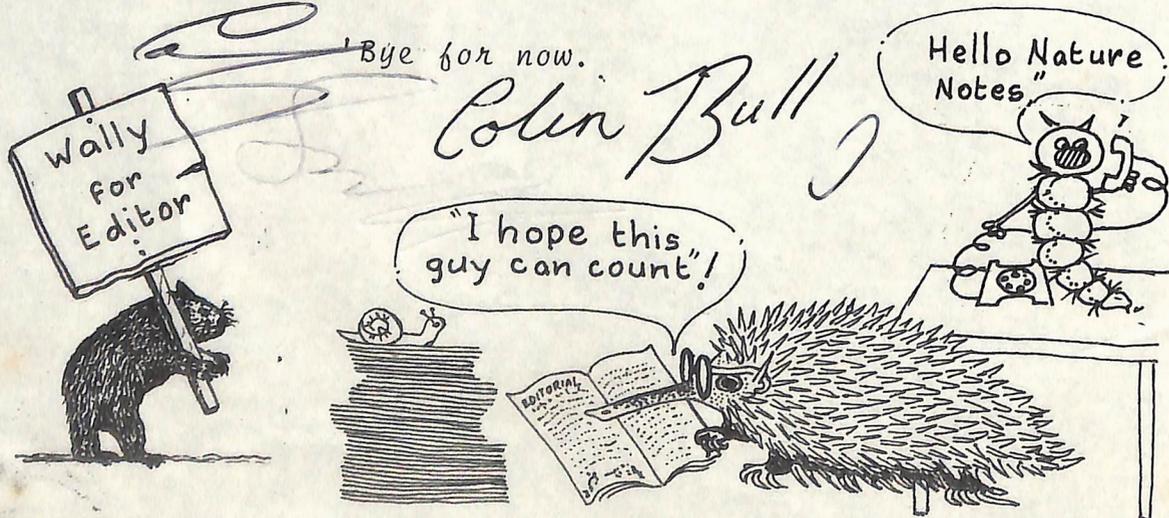
HI!

Welcome back to the pages of Nature Notes for 1979. By the time most of you read this you will have been back at school for 4 weeks. Here at Nature Notes we have been back working to prepare this Edition and the edition of Probe for you. Did you know that this is Nature Notes' 16th year of production? In 1964, Nature Notes started with an edition of 250 copies at East Burwood Primary School. The first Editor was Mr. G. White. In 1968, Nature Notes moved to Blackburn Lake Primary School and later it moved to here, Ringwood East Primary School. Today Nature Notes is sent to nearly every Australian State.

As mentioned in the last edition of 1978, Mr. Archibald is no longer Editor. He has finished his studies, but fortunately he has been appointed to Ringwood East P.S. and so he will continue to help in the production of Nature Notes and help me to control Wally and his friends. (?)

Though we lost one person, we are still keeping two others; Miss Orme, the Editor of Probe. Mrs Prohasky has also remained to help in production.

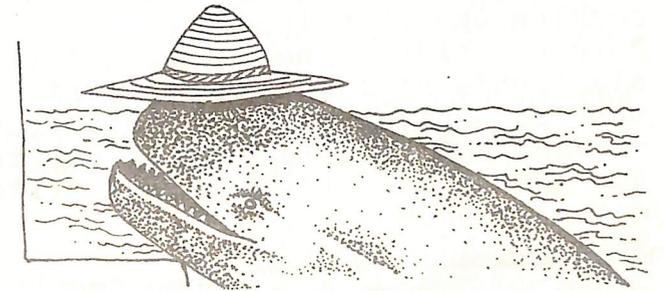
Our articles this month still have a "salty air" about them as the weather is still warm enough to enjoy the beach. Unfortunately we have no letters to publish this month so do write. Wally will award a book to the most interesting letter each month.



# Famous Animals

## MOBY - The sunburnt whale..

Marineland in Florida, U.S.A. has a performing pilot whale called Moby. Between shows Moby likes to rest his "chin" on the edge of his tank and watch people. One day in 1962 Moby leaned over the edge a little too far and fell out of his tank! It took 20 men to lift 500 kilogram Moby back into his pool by putting two big slings around him. Doctors at Marineland reported that Moby was alright except for a few scratches and a mild case of sunburn!



Q. Why do whales and dolphins seem to like coming to the surface so often?

Q. Whales are not fish but they are really .....

Q. Have you heard of any other stories of stranded whales? What happened to them?

NEXT MONTH: Old Tom  
The whalers' friend.

## ....CONTENTS.....

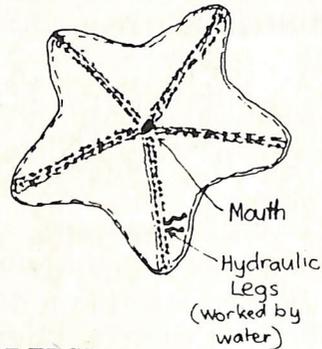
- p.2. Editorial.
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- W: PROHASKY
- R: MARSDEN
- K: DYER.



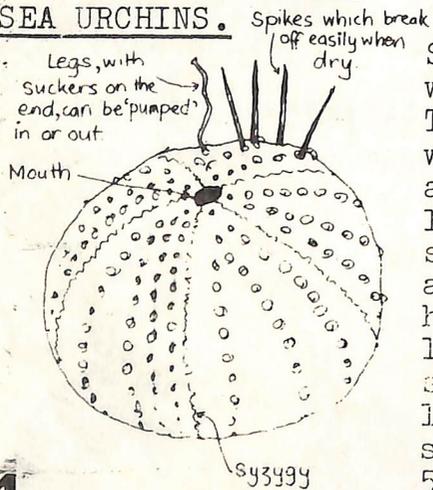
# The Mighty



## STARFISH.

No starfish has less than 5 "arms" though some have more. They move about by using lots of little hollow legs which are moved by pumping water through them. Starfish are very clever at opening mussels and cockles and when they have, they squirt digestive juices inside to help them eat the food. Then the starfish's stomach comes out of its mouth and takes in the food- after which the starfish swallows its stomach and food together!(What terrible manners). On the top of the starfish is a filter through which salt water is sucked in.

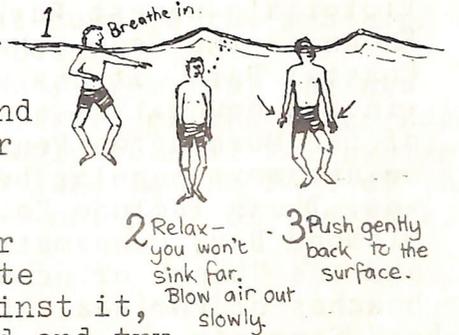
## SEA URCHINS.



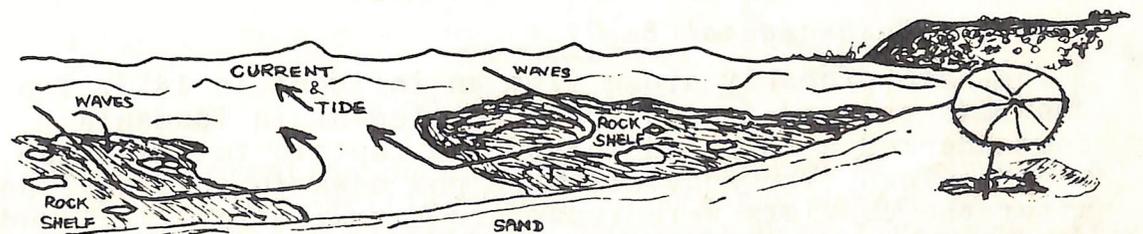
Some people used to think these were eggs but this is not so. They are rather like a starfish with the points all sewn together, as they have the same sort of legs to get around with and a similar crusty shell(which is also their skeleton). Urchins, however, don't eat shellfood like starfish. They suck in sand and clean off the tiny algae living on it for their food. A sea-urchin is actually made of 5 "plates" joined together. ( A join in the plates is called a

# Ocean

syzygy- try that word in "Hang the Butcher"!.) The spines on the outside discourage fish from eating them.



Have you ever felt how strong the sea can be? People who spend a lot of time on or in the water have learnt never to fight the ocean- because it always wins. When they get caught in a rip or a strong current they don't waste their energy trying to swim against it, but they keep afloat and relaxed and try to either swim across the current, or to even let the current take them to land. There are stories of people who have stayed afloat (in the way shown in the pictures above) for days in the ocean way out of their depth, because they didn't panic and waste their energy. How about next time you're at the pool or the beach, you practice staying afloat and maybe next summer there will be fewer drownings in Australia.



A good place NOT to swim when the tide is going out! The waves come crashing in on the rocks and then all the water drains out through the channel between them, The current becomes so strong that even good swimmers could drown if they tried to fight it. So next time you find a nice little "pocket beach" (especially at a 'back-beach' like Blairgowrie or Sorrento) check on the tides and currents before swimming.



# Cape Schanck

Stretching along the coast from Portsea to Cape Schanck is one of Victoria's newest Parks. Known as the Cape Schanck Coastal Park, it has within its boundaries some of the Mornington Peninsulars most popular beaches. These include Koonya, Diamond Bay, Gunnamatta and the "back" or ocean beaches of Portsea, Rye and Sorrento.

However, this park is not solely devoted to the beaches. It also has two very beautiful walking tracks where those wishing to explore the park more fully can do it in relevant ease and safety. The first of these tracks, "Coppin's Track" is found at Sorrento while the second, "Bushrangers' Bay Nature Trail" is found at Cape Schanck.

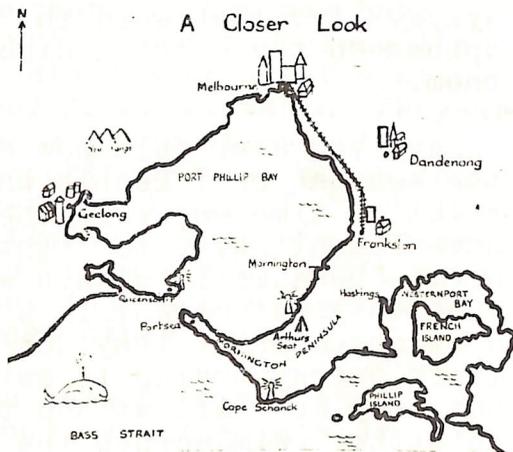
## BUSHRANGERS' BAY NATURE TRAIL.

Why "Bushrangers' Bay"?

The name probably arose from an incident in 1853. Two convicts escaped from a Penal Settlement in Tasmania, commandeered a ship and forced the Captain to take them to the Mainland. The convicts were put down in this bay. Soon after the convicts were recaptured at Kilmore (Vic.) and were later executed.

*The Nature Trail.*

The trail commences near the Cape Schanck car park and winds around Bushrangers' Bay to Main Creek, a distance of about 3 Km. At the end of the trail there are two further tracks. The track on the left leads to Boneo Road. This is 2 Km. away. If you decide to take this track, it is advisable to have someone meet you at Boneo Road, as it is a long hike back to the car park via the road.

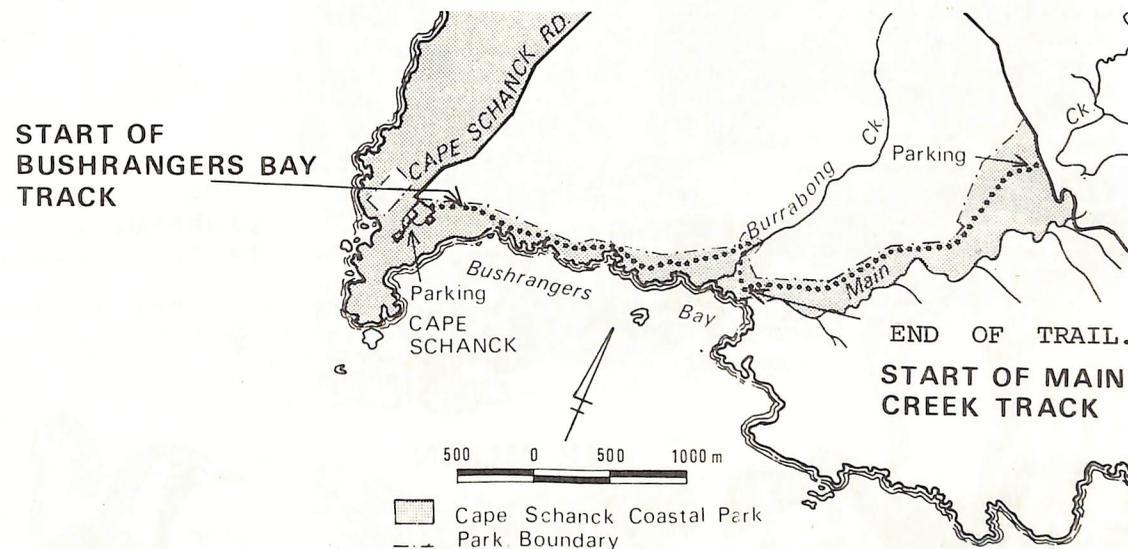


# Coastal Park

This track follows the ridge above the Main Creek and passes through several Banksia groves which attract prolific bird life.

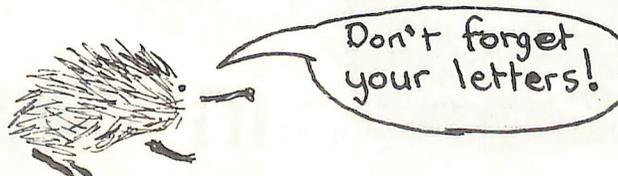
The track to the right descends down to the mouth of the Main Creek and a broad sandy beach.

As the Nature Trail ends well away from your car and you have to return via the trail itself or the Boneo Road track a visit to the beach area would be well worthwhile as a relaxing break. However, the land to the EAST of the Main Creek is private property and not part of the Park.



More information on the Nature Trail can be found in a guide booklet entitled "Bushrangers Bay Nature Walk" and it can be obtained from the National Parks' Service office situated at "SEAWINDS" Purves Road, Arthur's Seat.

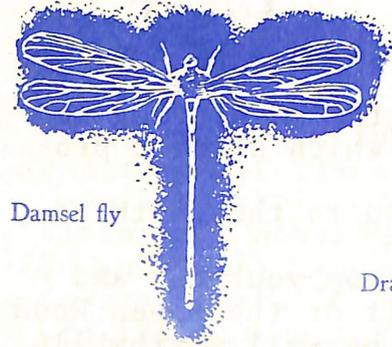
Bushrangers Bay is a delightful area to visit, along with all the Coastal Park so visit it soon with your family or as a grade excursion.



Ringwood East P.S. 7

## DRAGONFLIES

What differences are there between dragonflies and damsel flies? What are their resting positions?

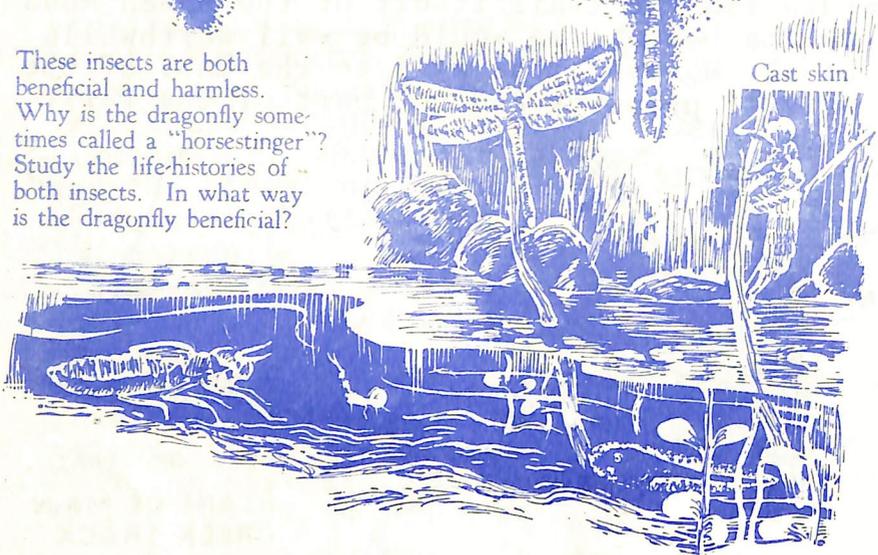


Damsel fly



Dragonfly

These insects are both beneficial and harmless. Why is the dragonfly sometimes called a "horsetinger"? Study the life-histories of both insects. In what way is the dragonfly beneficial?



Cast skin

## THE MOON

Easter does not occur at the same time each year. You can calculate the date. Good Friday is the first Friday after the first full moon after March 21.



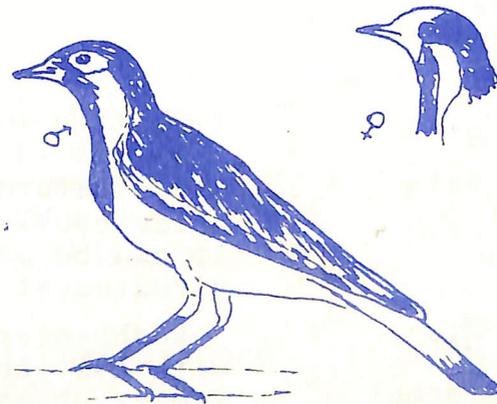
8

What causes earth-shine? At what phases of the moon are you most likely to see it?

# Things to Look for

Most people can recognize the MUDLARK. It is one of our most useful birds. Watch it. What is it eating? When does it make its call? How can you tell the male from the female bird? In the drawings I have used the usual signs to denote female and male. A man named LINNAEUS used these signs in 1751 to define these terms.

♂ They meant ♀ for Mars and for Venus.



in MARCH:

Cumulo-nimbus

## THUNDER AND LIGHTNING



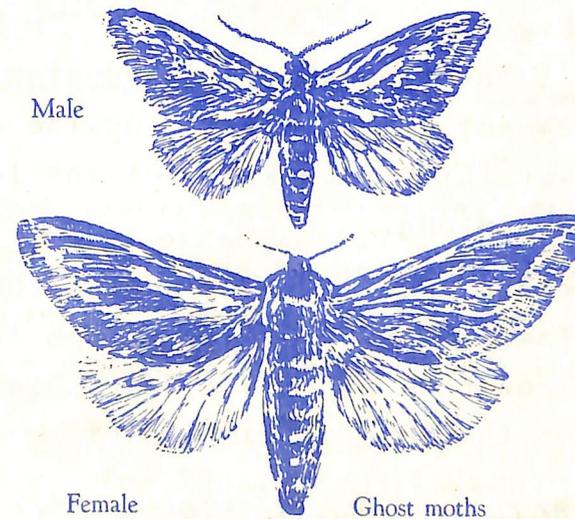
What is lightning? What is thunder? Why does thunder rumble? Learn to recognize the many kinds of lightning. Which is the most dangerous? How are buildings protected from lightning?



Heat thunderstorms usually occur when the weather is humid. Why? Why does the air feel fresh after a storm? If in the open during a storm, do not shelter under a tree. Hollows are safer than hilltops.

## MOTHS

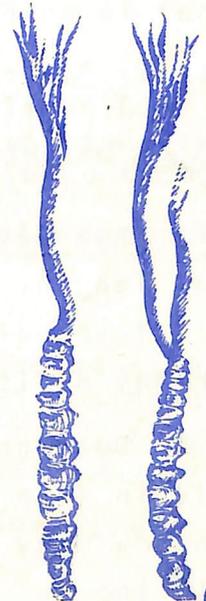
Most moths are night-fliers. Some have a long nectar-sucking beak (proboscis), some do not feed at all. Study the life-histories of some moths. After autumn rains watch for the large pupa-cases of wood-moths. Some of the swift-moths have ground-living larvae, which often serve as hosts for the vegetable caterpillar fungus.



Male

Female

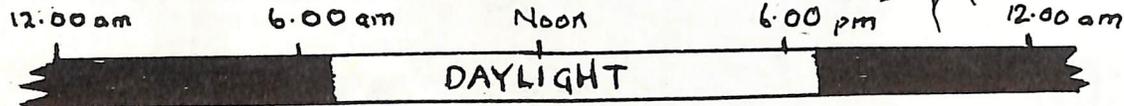
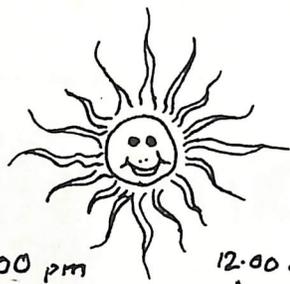
Ghost moths



Ghost moth larvae or vegetable caterpillars

9

# EQUINOX



As we commence the month of March, we realize that the days are shortening. Once, not to many weeks ago, we could play outside in the daylight until 9:00 pm. Now the light begins to fade at 7:00 pm. This is due to two reasons, the first being the end of Daylight Savings and the second being that the days are actually getting shorter.

An interesting project you may like to attempt during March is to make a graph of the daylight hours for each day. To do this you will need to find out the times of SUNRISE and SUNSET for each day. These can be found on the same page as the WEATHER MAP in the daily newspapers.

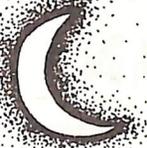
## MARCH IS EQUINOX MONTH.

What is an Equinox?

The WORLD BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIA defines Equinox "as the time of the year when the centre of the Sun is directly over the Equator. Equinox means equal night, but the word Equidies would be just as correct as it means equal day."

Equinox then, is the time when day and night are of equal length. I am not going to tell you the exact date but let you discover this by working out the length of each day as it comes along.

In December we had what is known as the LONGEST DAY, while in June we have the SHORTEST DAY. From this information how many Equinoxes do we have a year? How many times would the Sun cross the Equator each year?



# EQUIDIES

Actually the Sun doesn't really cross the Equator or even move. It appears to move as the Earth revolves around Sun. As the Earth sits at a funny angle in Space, the Sun appears to change position in the sky at various times throughout the year. In Summer at midday, the sun appears to be almost overhead, while in winter it appears low in the sky at midday.

You can observe this yourself through a very simple experiment. All you need is a SHADOW STICK (the school flagpole will do.) and the Sun.

Every FOUR weeks for the rest of the year go out at midday and mark the shadow on the ground.

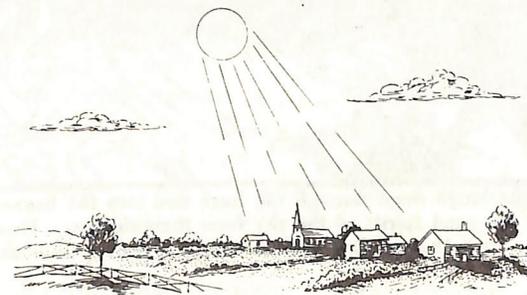
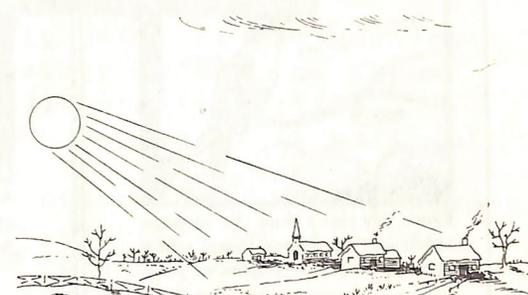


Diagram above shows the sun high in the sky in the summer shining nearly straight down on us, giving us hot weather. In winter the



sun's rays strike us at an angle, so we have cool weather, even though the earth is closer to the sun than it is in summer.

With your teacher's permission, you might be able to mark the shadow permanently in paint. This would be very helpful in keeping an accurate record.

By September, an interesting pattern will emerge.

HINTS : Measure the shadow at the same time.

e.g. 12:00 noon.

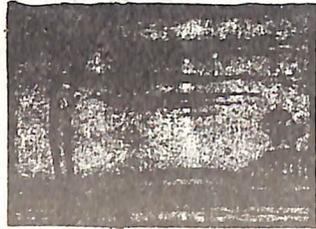
Once every 4 weeks is sufficient.

The 22nd. of March would be the ideal time to commence.

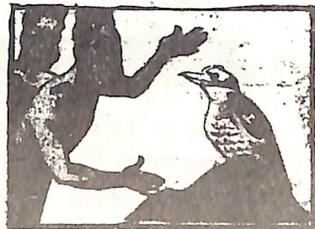
# The Legend of the SUN.



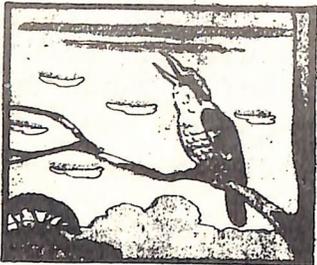
Many years ago the good spirits who keep the fires burning in the sun used to sleep too much.



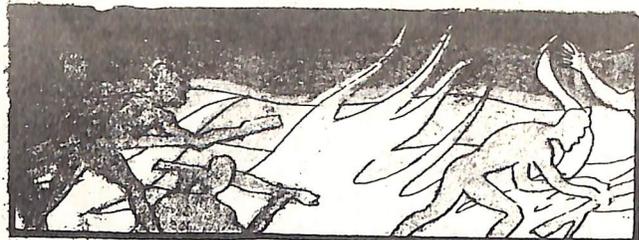
Sometimes they slept for days, and then the sun did not rise and the earth was in darkness.



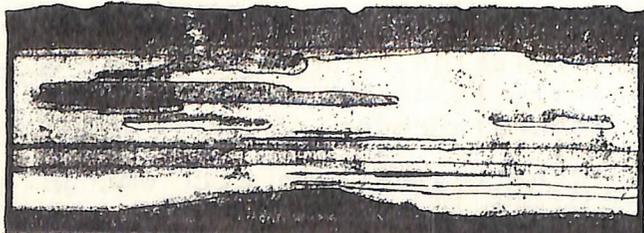
So wise men asked the jackass to wake the spirits each day so that the sun would shine again.



Every day since then the jackass sends out its merry laugh when the morning star begins to pale.



And the laugh rings through the bush and into the heavens to rouse the good spirits of the sky from their slumber. Then the spirits light the sun-fire and the earth is bathed in sunshine.



Brighter and brighter burns the sun-fire till at last the spirits become tired and the fire dies down and goes out at the end of the day. Then they sleep in peace until the jackass laughs next morning.



# CAPE SCHANCK LIGHTHOUSE

**SHIRE OF FLINDERS**

**CAPE SCHANCK RESERVE**

- CAPE SCHANCK WAS DISCOVERED BY GEORGE BASS IN THE FAMOUS BOAT TOM THUMB IN 1798.
- IT WAS NAMED AFTER CAPTAIN SCHANCK R.N. DESIGNER OF THE SURVEY SHIP LADY NELSON.
- THE LIGHTHOUSE WAS PLANNED BY MR. J. BALMAIN IN 1857.
- THE LIGHTHOUSE IS 60 FT. HIGH.
- THE LIGHT IS 350 FT. ABOVE SEA LEVEL & IS VISIBLE FOR 25 MILES.

THE RESERVE IS BEING DEVELOPED BY THE SHIRE OF FLINDERS AND PARKING FEES COLLECTED ARE DIRECTED TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT



Cape Schanck is the most southerly point of the Mornington Peninsular. The coast immediately around the Cape is very rugged with almost vertical granite cliffs capped with limestone. The lighthouse itself is built of locally quarried limestone.

The light today is under the control of the Department of Transport. Visits to the Lighthouse can be arranged by ringing the Officer-in-Charge of the Light.

From the tower, the light is visible for 45 Km. and goes through its sequence every every 22.5 seconds. This is known as a MORSE-N Sequence. It first flashes for 10.8 sec. followed by a 5.8 eclipse stage (black-out), then a flash of .1 of a sec and then a further eclipse stage. Immediately the cycle recommences.

All light-houses around the world have their own special pattern or sequence of flashes. A ship's captain could immediately pinpoint his position by the flashes from a lighthouse. Along the Victorian coast there are a number of lighthouses. Some of these like Cape Schanck are run by the Department of Transport, others are run by the Department of Works. See if you can find out the differences.

# LETTERS, LETTERS

As this is the first edition of Nature Notes in 1979 we have not yet received any mail! So I decided we would list all the people who have contributed letters, ideas and puzzles in the last 12 months. Next issue I hope to have some 1979 letters. Each month I will award a book prize to the most interesting letter. *the Editor.....*

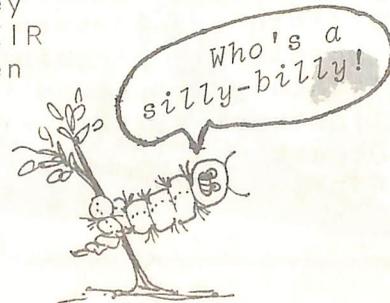
Bradley Reeves and Michael Penn; Sean Carter; Mary-Anne Ambrose; Danielle Bakic; Nicole Frieyer; Michelle Hooper; Jenni Ingham; Stuart Robertson; Lisa Nettleton; Larissa Shatin; Stephanie Brewer; Paul Floody; Melissa Gray; Diana Johns; David Welch; Lisa Snell; Robert Van Duynhoven; Barbara Ross; Karen Gayland; Santha Traill; Fiona Richardson; Karen Taylor; Sandra White;

A group of students from BRIGHT H. E. S. Lisa Banyard, Ian McGilivray; Melissa B. and Anthony.

....and a group of HEATHMONT P. S. students who wrote letters about their visit to Ringwood Lake. Craig Archer, Fiona Fell, Susan Gorham, Lisa Beard, Andrew Taylor, Jane Colville, Patricia Alvarez, Jacqui Read, Gabrielle Pate, Kim Keyser, Lisa Johnson, Christine Lindsay and Phillip Parkinson.

Many children write to Nature Notes with very interesting and exciting letters, BUT they forget two very important things. THEIR NAME and THEIR ADDRESS. So please when you write don't be a silly-billy and forget the most important part.

Remember a book prize to the most interesting letter each month.....



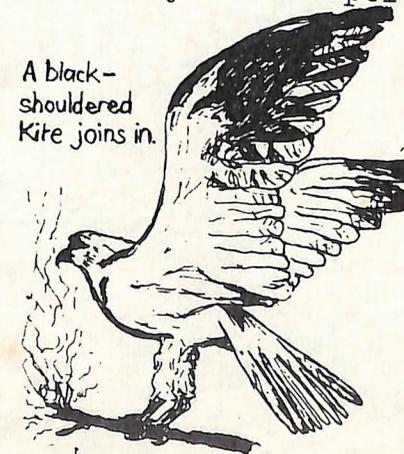
This is supposed to be a LETTER PAGE !!

## Take-away Food

When in Queensland a few years ago fires were a very common sight. Always above the fire could be seen dozens of fork-tailed kites and hawks. They were feasting on the insects rising in the thermal currents created by the fire. Often they would swoop on mice fleeing from the flames.



Aboriginals in the Northern Territory have reported seeing these kites actually spreading the grass fires in order to get a meal. They have been seen picking up smouldering sticks in their talons and dropping them in fresh patches of dry grass. Then they climbed and waited for a fresh meal of grasshoppers, mice and snakes.



A black-shouldered Kite joins in.

Pretty smart, don't you think, and yet "bird-brained" is a form of derision!



# PUZZLE PAGE



DIRECTIONS: Cross out all the words listed at the side of this TELE-WORD and the letters left will be a message for you! For all new readers, all you have to do is find the words hidden in the puzzle horizontally, vertically, diagonally written forwards or backwards. GOOD LUCK!

*Algae, anemone,  
 Balmain Bug, chiton  
 chiton, crab,  
 jellyfish, kelp,  
 lice, mussels,  
 octopus, penguins,  
 rockpools, sand,  
 sea-dragon,  
 sea-horse, seal,  
 sea urchin,  
 seaweed,  
 shark egg, shells,  
 squid, starfish,  
 waves.*

A	S	E	A	W	E	E	D	L	A	E	S
L	N	J	S	H	E	L	L	S	B	E	T
G	S	E	N	S	E	V	A	W	A	A	A
A	E	L	M	T	U	R	E	U	L	C	R
E	A	L	B	O	N	O	R	T	M	H	F
S	H	Y	A	E	N	C	K	S	A	I	I
L	O	F	R	I	H	E	E	D	I	T	S
O	R	I	C	I	O	S	L	N	N	O	H
O	S	S	N	B	A	C	P	A	B	N	O
P	E	H	K	A	G	A	T	S	U	I	D
K	L	I	C	E	N	T	H	O	G	I	I
C	S	S	N	I	U	G	N	E	P	Y	U
O	S	H	A	R	K	E	G	G	E	U	Q
R	A	R	N	O	G	A	R	D	A	E	S