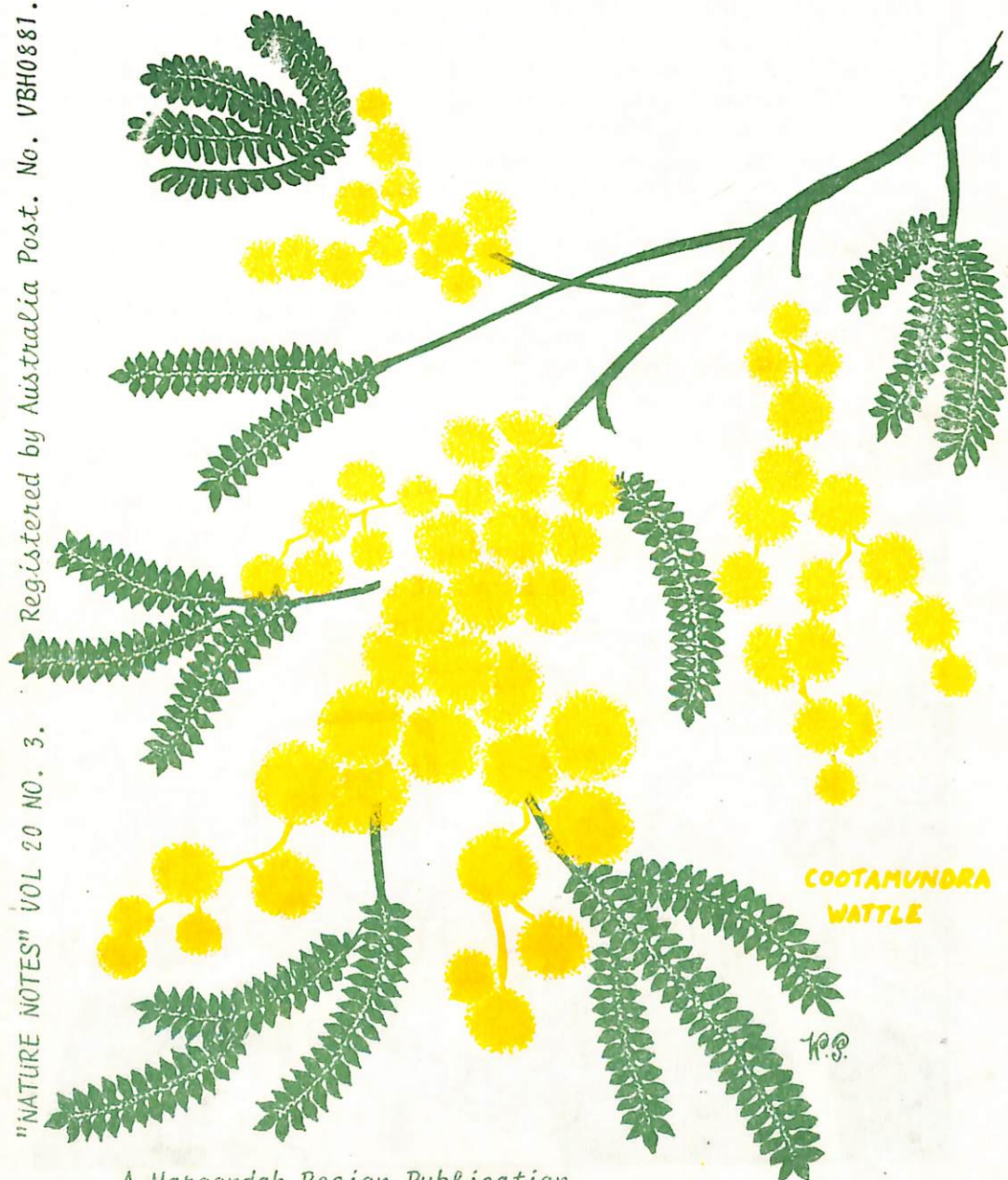


NATURE NOTES

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COOTAMUNDRA
WATTLE

K.P.

ED'S PAGE —

FAMOUS FACES

Yes, this month at Nature Notes we're taking a look at a few of our better known places, birds and animals. Australia is a country full of exciting flora and fauna, (And if you don't know what those words mean, look them up!) which we sometimes take for granted. Well, open your eyes, look around, and SEE what we've all got - and can share and look after together, in this terrific land of ours!

Well that's enough of a lecture for today, but I do hope you enjoy this month's magazine, and that it gives you something to think about. Write in to Wally and the crew here at NN and tell us what YOU think. YOUR ideas are very special and important to us!

Happy Reading
Mandy Carmichael
Editor.



To find out.....

What is a MONOLITH?
Who was Ayers Rock named after? (Hint...he could've been a Governor...)
Find out about Mt. Augustus east of Carnarvon in W.A.

The rock is said to have brilliant color changes during the day, appearing all shades of pinks, purples and reds. What do you think causes these color changes?

Ayers Rock is made up of sandstone, with feldspar in it, known as arkose.

Ayers Rock was known as 'OOLERA' by the Loritjas, and was a sacred Dreaming Place. Can you find any legends or stories about Ayers Rock, written by the Aborigines?

"When I was only 2 miles distant, and the hill for the first time, coming fairly into view what was my astonishment to find it was an immense pebble, rising abruptly from the plain"

This was written by W.C. Gosse, when he discovered Ayers Rock, in 1873.

The rock is 9km around the base, and is 335 metres high.

What desert is Ayers Rock found in?

3 AYERS ROCK 8

THE MIGHTY MURRAY

The Murray River is an important river to everyone who lives in Australia. It provides water for a great variety of purposes, to areas far away from the river's banks.

Australia is too far south on a map of the world to get monsoonal, tropical rains, and too far north to get rains that colder climates do. What with the flatness of our continent, and the low humidity, coupled with extreme temperatures, Australia ends up having the 'run off', or amount of water in her rivers, of a country $\frac{1}{4}$ of her size!

Some rivers flow only in the wet season, and then only for a few months, but the Murray flows all year 'round. It is a very long river, even by world standards, when you count its tributaries, the Darling, the Murrumbidgee, the Campaspe and the Loddon rivers into its length of over 7000 kms. The entire 'river system' of the Murray covers over 1,000,000 square kilometres.

The Murray river starts in the alps, near Mt. Kosciusko, where it begins as a mass of small streams, fed by the snow and rains. It is fast flowing as it winds its way down to the plains. When it reaches

the plains, it becomes a much slower river, because the pull of gravity is greatly reduced.

One of the dams at the head of the Murray river

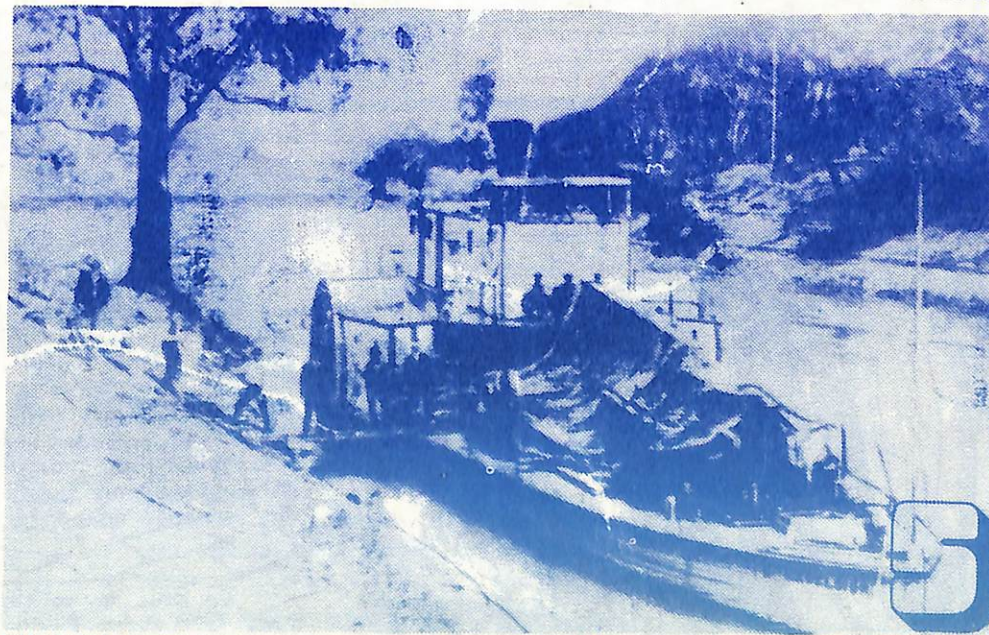
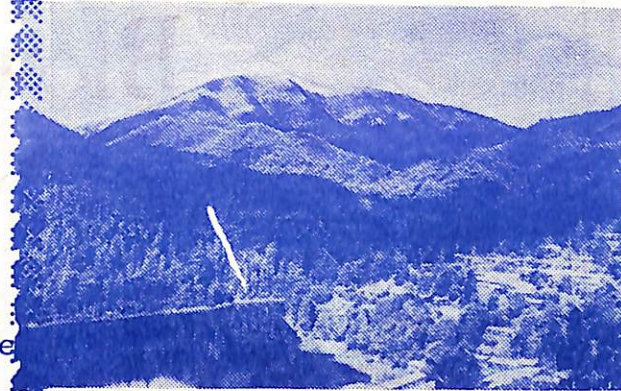
No, the answers to the wally word aren't hidden down here!

The Murray drops ever so slightly on its way to the sea, that it looks like it isn't flowing downhill at all. Today the Murray is dammed to help use its water for irrigation and electric power. This has brought about big changes to the wildlife of the areas around its banks, and to such things as river travel.

*Find out about the changes that damming the Murray has brought about.

A view of the Murray river near the alps.

Old time transport along the Murray.



This is Your Life Bertie Blow Fly



YUK DO I HAVE TO INTERVIEW THIS CREEP?!

... OH...ER...YES FOLKS HERE HE IS, IF WE CAN GET HIM TO SETTLE.

PS&T...DONT SWATH HIM...YET!



WHAT A KIND MAN... LEAVING THE LID OFF... JUST THE PLACE FOR MY LITTLE DARLINGS!

YOUR START IN LIFE BERTIE BEGAN IN A GARBAGE CAN... YOUR MOTHER BERYL LAID COUNTLESS EGGS AMONG THE ROTTEN VEGETABLES. SMELLY ROTTEN MEAT IS ALSO CONSIDERED A SUITABLE 'NURSERY' FOR YOU BLOWIES

IN A COUPLE OF DAYS YOU TURNED INTO A FAT JUICY MAGGOT ..(UGH!) KNOWN AS LARVAE.

AH YES, I REMEMBER THE LOVELY SMELL OF THAT GARBAGE CAN UMM.



A WEEK LATER THE OUTER SKIN HARDENED (PUPAE) AND IN THE CLOSE CONFINES OF THAT SHELL YOU TURNED INTO A BLOWFLY, READY TO EMERGE AND START SPREADING GERMS.....YUK!

"IT'S ALWAYS NICE AND WARM HERE ISNT IT BETTY?"



WE STILL TRY TO 'GET AWAY FROM IT ALL DOWN THERE FROM TIME TO TIME.



OF COURSE THE GOOD OLD AUSTRALIAN BARBEQUE WOULDN'T BE COMPLETE WITHOUT YOU AND YOUR FLY FRIENDS.... NOT ONLY DO YOU ANNOY THE FOLKS BUT YOU TRAMPLE ALL OVER THEIR FOOD....

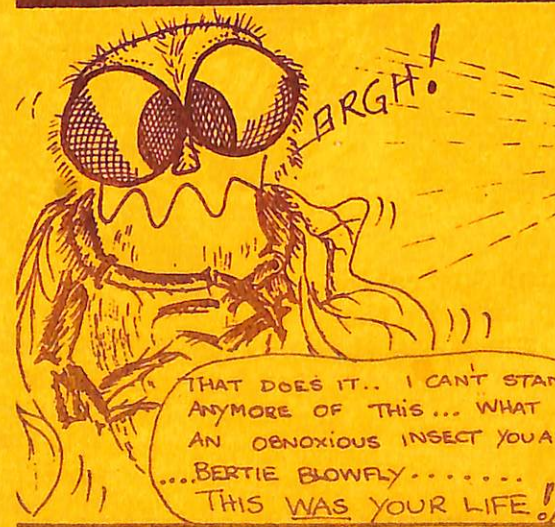
....OF COURSE YOU DONT EAT THE FOOD AS WE KNOW IT, RATHER YOU POUR A SPECIAL DIGESTIVE JUICE ONTO THE FOOD TO DISSOLVE IT, THEN SUCK UP THE LIQUID WITH YOUR MOUTHPART... THIS IS ONE SURE WAY OF SPREADING GERMS WOULDN'T YOU SAY BERTIE?

NOT A PRETTY SIGHT:



LOOKING THROUGH YOUR 'LIFE' BOOK BERTIE I SEE YOU HAVE QUITE A WORLD-WIDE REPUTATION!

OH NO! NOT THAT AGAIN UGH!



THAT DOES IT.. I CAN'T STAND ANYMORE OF THIS... WHAT AN OBNOXIOUS INSECT YOU ARE...BERTIE BLOWFLY..... THIS WAS YOUR LIFE!

Many thanks to Lord Measures for this article.

I was once called the Hawksbury clock.

BONZA BIRD AWARDS

Move over, Countdown, here come the Nature Notes "Best Known Bird" Awards for 1983!



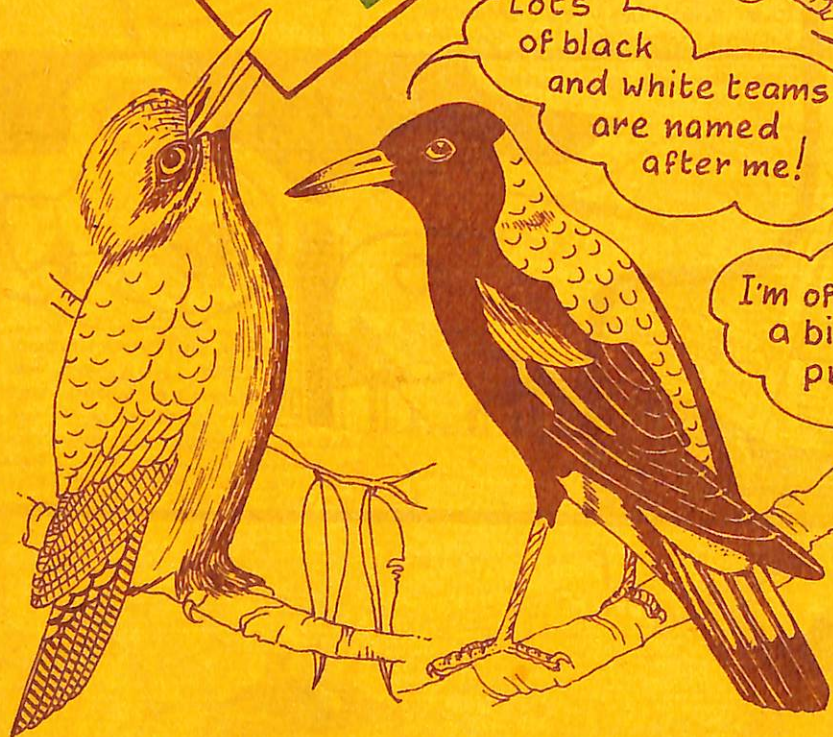
Lots of black and white teams are named after me!

I love tomato sauce (!!)

I'm often called a bird of prey.

Arrp! I can't fly.

Major Mitchell and I share names!



Hey Ed- what about the wonderfulest wombat award?



Here's a bevy of beautiful Australian birds, all vying for top spot in the Nature Notes Awards.....and guess what.... YOU'RE the judge!

See if you can name each of these famous birds by using the clues each one gives you. Which one do YOU think is the most well known of ALL Australian birds? WHY? See if you can find out where these birds live in Australia. Do any of these birds live near you?

TIRELESS

TORTOISE

There's a tortoise at Bundaberg in Queensland which may be the oldest recorded living creature in the world.

'Torty' is a Madagascar land tortoise bought to Australia in 1847. She lived in a back yard in Bundaberg for 80 years before being given to the Alexandra Park Zoo in Bundaberg.

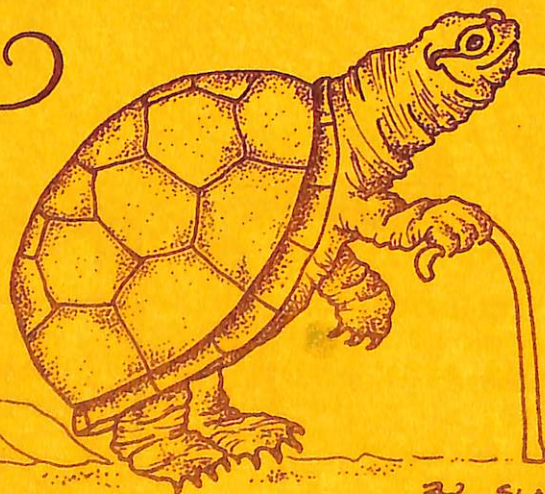
Torty's recorded history started in 1847 when Mr. John Powe stepped ashore at Madagascar which is near Africa, on his way to Australia. He was given the tortoise by the captain of a ship and he put Torty in his coat pocket during the long trip to Sydney, and then to Gladstone. While in Gladstone, Torty would wander off to hibernate during the winter and return home in the spring. She was cared for by four generations of the family, which moved to Bundaberg in 1884.

Torty was given to the zoo by Miss E. Powe when she had to leave the city because of illness in 1964.

*How old is Torty now?

*What does hibernate mean?

*Where is Madagascar on a map? What are some other animals that live there?



...OOOH!
...THOSE
YOUNGSTERS
ARE
TALKING
ABOUT
ME!

BY SLARY BARDFAST.

POST BAG

Depr Wolly,
My pet
alligator think
you look
tasty

Thanks Merran for this letter, sorry we couldn't print your photo, but you'll be receiving a book prize in the near future. Pretty good poem eh?

How about an echidna poem?

Dear Nature Notes,

We have a holiday house down in Gippsland. When we go there, we leave apples and bread out for the possums.

One night before we went to bed, Mum called us out to see the possums. There was a young one and a Mother with her baby on her back. The Mother ran away but the young one stayed. We could not get it and it ate out of our hand.

Merran

POSSUMS

Little possums run at night,
In the trees and out of sight,
With paws so sweet is how they eat,
If you leave some bread and butter,
They might come to you for supper,
Playing on the roof they run,
Having lots of noisy fun,
But when the dog comes up to scare,
The possums flee most everywhere!

by Merran Williams

aged 10

Do you ask questions about what you're reading, to make sure you understand everything? Wilbur the wombat, Wally's cousin does. See if you can help Wilbur find the answers to the questions he asks about this newspaper clipping.

HEY WALLY!



Where's Christmas Island, Wally?

What's an atoll?

Birds vanish from atoll

WASHINGTON, 15 March. — Almost all the 17 million adult sea birds on Christmas Island in the Pacific have mysteriously disappeared, leaving behind thousands of chicks who starved to death, scientists said yesterday.

Researchers said the weather may have caused the exodus, the first such massive disappearance of a bird population recorded on a tropical atoll. Dr Ralph Schreiber, curator of ornithology at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, said about 18 million birds representing 18 species either abandoned the island or perished. "Some bird species will lose at least an entire generation because of the disruption," Dr Schreiber said.

What do wedge-tailed shearwaters look like, Wally?

What's ornithology, Wally?

Hang on Wilbur

FACTS AND FIGURES



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.

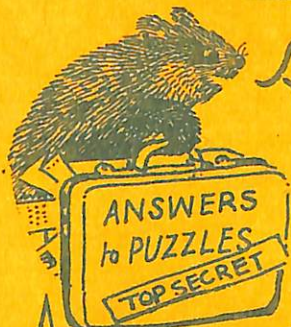


- * To prevent their being separated by their watery couch, families of sea otters bind themselves together with strands of seaweed before going to sleep.
- * That because a snake's teeth slope backwards, once it has started to swallow its prey it cannot disgorge it. So if two snakes fix on the same breakfast at the same time, the larger snake ends up by swallowing the other snake as well!



I wonder what he meant when he said 'come around for tea?'

HEY! HERE THEY ARE!



- ANSWERS TO 'GREEN & GOLD'.....
- TO PROTECT IT FROM PREDATORS
 - BY HEAT OF A BUSHFIRE
 - GOLDEN WATTLE
 - AFRICA.

Answers to Wally Word

1. Possum
2. Kangaroo
3. Mole
4. Leadbeater
5. Alpine
6. Parrot
7. Taipan
8. Boab
9. Rat
10. Dew
11. Ghost gum
12. Australia
13. Lyre
14. Gould
15. Bunyip
16. Olgas
17. Oar
18. Spider
19. Rain
20. Rabbit.

How many did you get right?

THANKS TO 'THE AGE' FOR THIS NEWS CLIPPING!

WALLY

Wally's Crossword

(With Wally's OWN numbering system, so watch out!)

DOWN

1. A well known marsupial, that lives in trees.
2. Another marsupial, that has a powerful tail.
3. Yes, another marsupial, that is blind and lives under ground.
4. The name of an endangered number 1. down.
5. The name given to snowy areas.
6. A brightly colored bird, that rhymes with carrot.
7. A deadly snake, from Northern Australia.
8. A tree that was once used as a jail, and is a bottle shape.
9. This can be both a small marsupial, or a rodent.
10. Important source of water in the desert.

ACROSS

11. A type of gum tree. (A spooky one!)
12. The name of our continent.
13. No, this bird doesn't tell fibs, although its name says it does!
14. This League loves nature.
15. Wally is scared of this mythical monster.
16. A group of mountains, near Ayers Rock.
17. Both a part of a boat, and the name of a strange looking fish.
18. A 'red back' is a
19. A tropical forest is often called aforest.
20. An introduced animal which is a great menace.

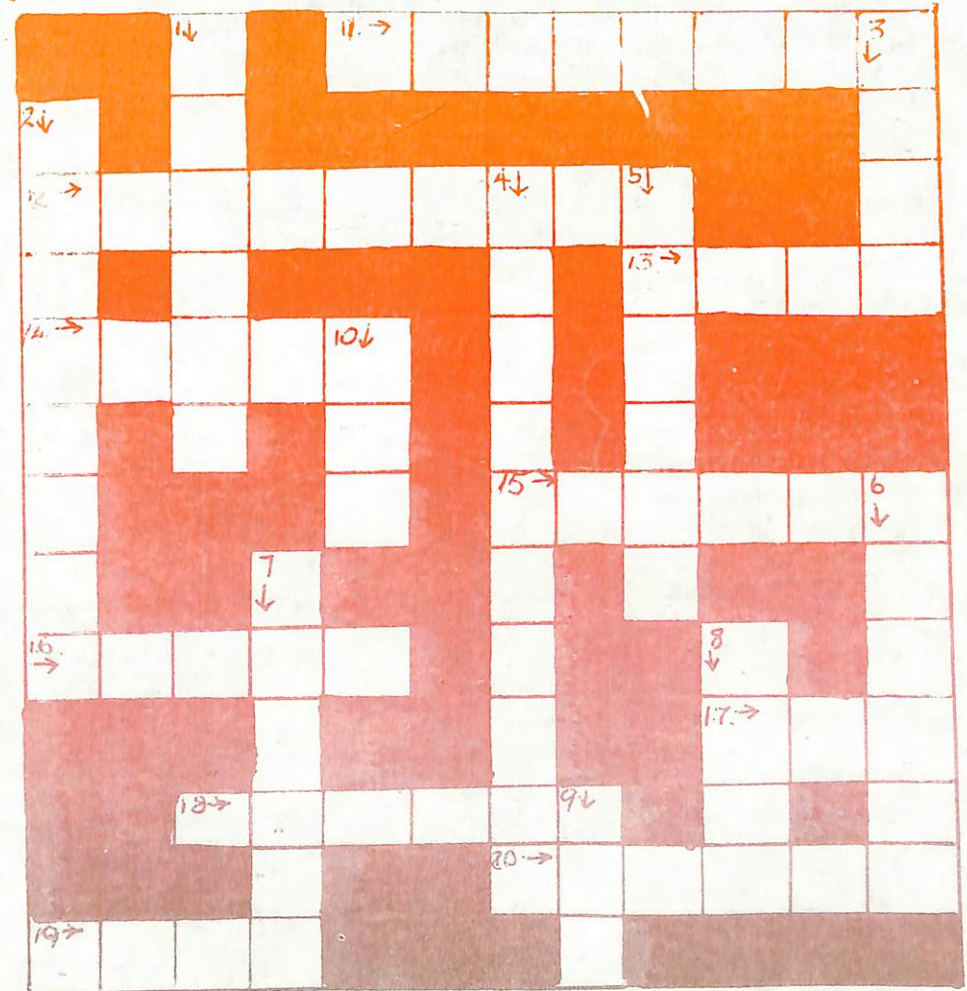
For the answers, you'll have to look for them in Nature Notes! Good Luck,

Wally

WORD!



Pit your wits against Wally's in his latest attempt at being Australia's Super Wally Word Maker-upperer!



GREEN & GOLD

Acacias form one of the largest groups of Australian plants. They can vary in height from a few inches to very large trees, up to 30 metres tall. They grow in all environments, and will grow in harsher places than the eucalypts.

Wattles are divided into types in two ways. As well as being divided into those which have feathery (or bipinnate) leaves and those which have flattened leaf stalks (or phyllodes), they can be divided into those with flowers in the form of fluffy balls and those with spikes or rods of flowers, known as catkins. All acacias have feathery leaves in the juvenile stage, but as the plant grows these become smaller and the stalks longer until the true leaves disappear, leaving only the phyllodes to do the work of the leaves.

Although the word acacia means 'plant with thorns', only a minority have thorns. The word 'wattle' came into use because acacia species were used to provide the slender sticks used in the 'wattle and daub' construction of huts in the early days of Australian settlement.

As acacia seeds have a very hard covering, they need to be treated prior to planting. This involves pouring boiling water over them and allowing them to soak overnight or filing a nick in the seed coat.

*WHY do you think nature has made the seed pod so strong? HOW do wattle seeds normally open? Name the type of wattle we use as a national flower. (Hint.. the name describes its color..) WHAT is the other country, starting with A that has several species of acacia?

ANSWERS HIDDEN SOMEWHERE IN NU!!)



Acacia flexifolia. Has pale yellow flowers during winter. Its foliage is grey-green. This shrub grows to a height of 1 - 1½m.



Acacia-myrtifolia. A small shrub growing to a height of 1 - 2m. Pale to creamy-yellow ball flowers appear during Spring.



Acacia glandulicarpa. A dense shrub which has small phyllodes and golden-yellow ball flowers which appear between August and October.