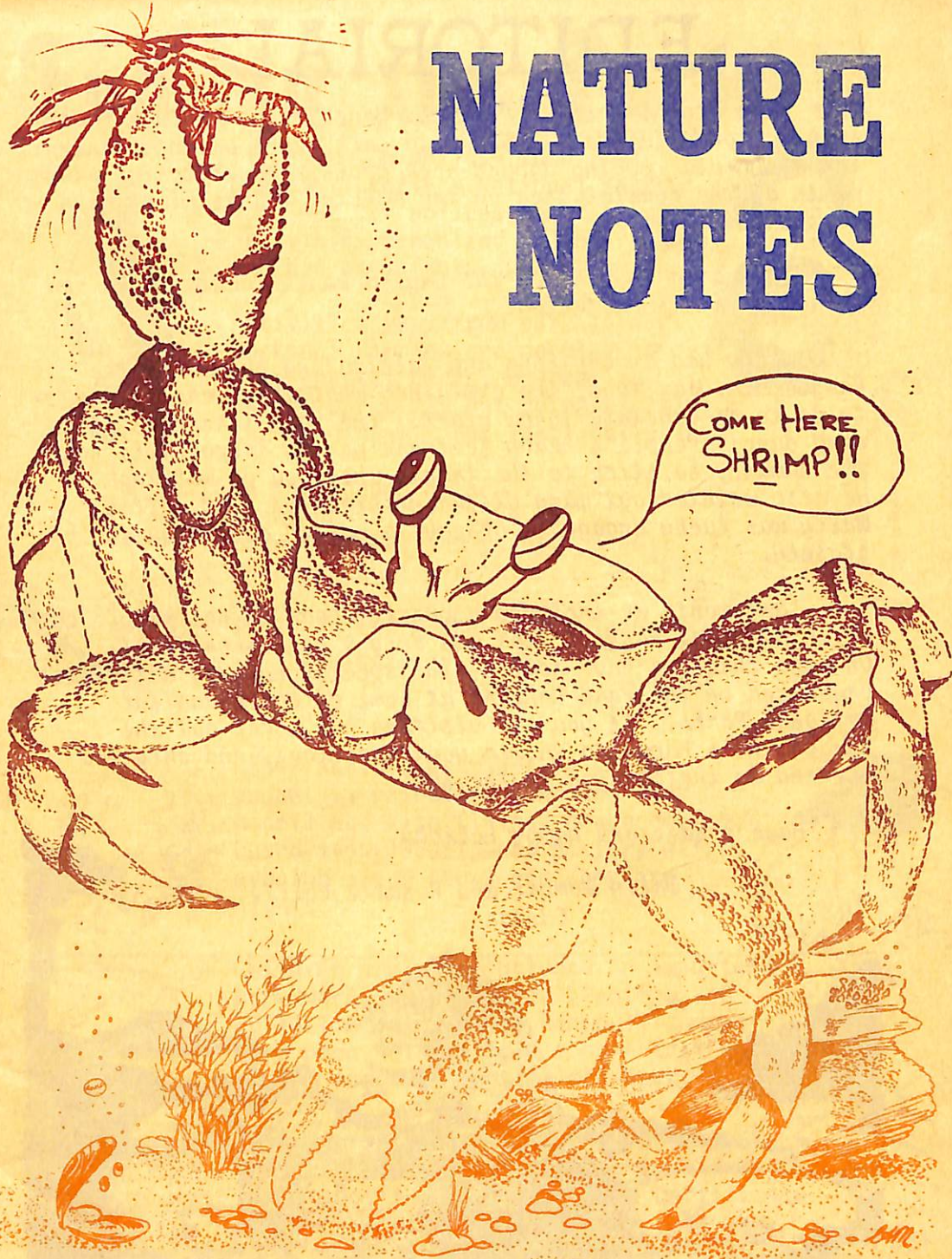


NATURE NOTES



Vol. 21 No. 10 Dec. 1984

EDITORIAL

This month, Wally, Ernie and Bruce, (from Nature Probe) spent a wonderful day at Sorrento Back Beach on the Mornington Peninsula, poking around rock pools, and exploring other parts of the coastal area on the walking tracks high up on the dunes.

This area is part of the Cape Schanck Coastal Park and therefore it is protected.

Wally had a very long and fascinating chat with the Ranger, Mr. Max Wood, who explained what they were trying to do to re-vegetate (grow plants) the bare stretches of sand dune; People's heavy feet are partly responsible for the damage, so stick to the tracks when you go walking! He also pointed out many different kinds of bird calls. Wally was lucky enough to observe a pallid cuckoo quite closely.

Last month we included a puzzle about things people can do in National Parks. That was only a very short list. On page three we have some of the special holiday activities organized by the Park Rangers at some of our beautiful National Parks. If you are visiting one, seek out the Ranger, he's happy to answer your questions, and only too pleased to include you in the fun.

Have a safe and happy holiday,

Wally Wombat and Rosalie Collie.
Editors.



Fun in the Parks!

If you're on holiday in or near one of Victoria's National Parks, look out for notices about special activities organized by the ranger and his assistants.

Activities vary from park to park. Rockpool rambles are popular in some coastal parks, whereas the inland parks may put on dusk stalks, Kangaroo crawls and spotlight walks.

In the Bogong National Park you might be able to have billy tea, damper, talks and yarns, as well as high country rambles.

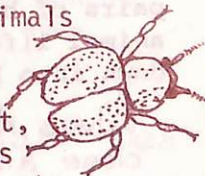
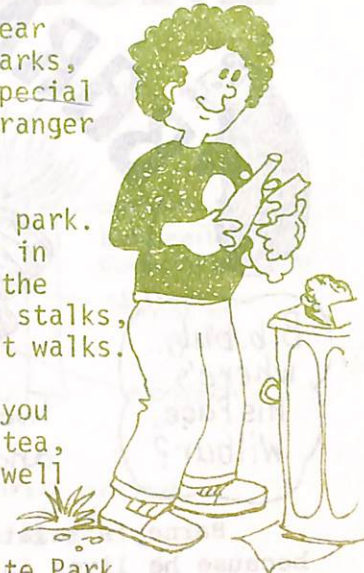
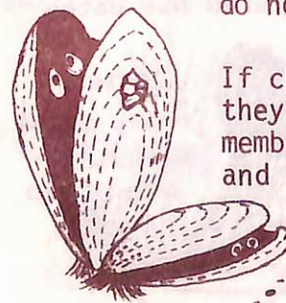
While in the Melba Gully State Park in the Otways, a popular night activity is to observe the "Glowing glow worms."

Other activities might be shadow puppetry, painting, sand and clay modelling, kite flying, beachcombing, bushdrives, aboriginal history walks, evening slide shows and campfire nights.

Children are also included in important park work, such as tree planting and collecting ringpulls. Ringpull competitions have been held to help ensure that animals do not eat them or get lock-beak.

If children finish a special worksheet, they can become Junior Rangers, and as members of the club receive a certificate and a newsletter later in the year.

Continued on
page
14.
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Meet

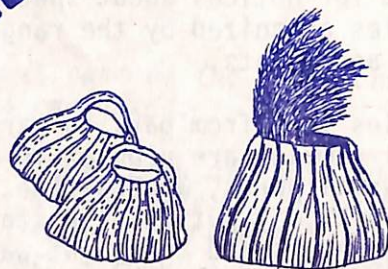


B.b.but...
where's
his face,
Wilbur?

BARNEY BARNACLE



Say hello
to Barney,
Wally.



Two barnacles at rest,
and one feeding.

and...

Barney's relatives are NOT molluscs as you might think, because he lives in a shell, BUT crustaceans! Like insects, crustaceans are arthropods - animals with jointed legs and a skeleton on the outside of the body. Other members of his family are crabs, shrimps and crayfish.

In the larval stage, barnacles swim around with three pairs of legs, but the adult barnacle has grown three more pairs of legs and a shell. It settles on something (a rock, driftwood, boat, crab or other sea creature,) and "cements" it's shell permanently to it. He lives inside comfortably standing on his head.

During low tide the shell remains tightly closed. As the tide rises and water washes over it, he opens the two little "doors" at the top of his shell and waves his six pairs of hairy legs around to catch the tiny particles of animal life which are his food. Then he swishes his catch down into his mouth.

valves that
close and
open shell

stomach
4 mouth



six
pairs
of
legs

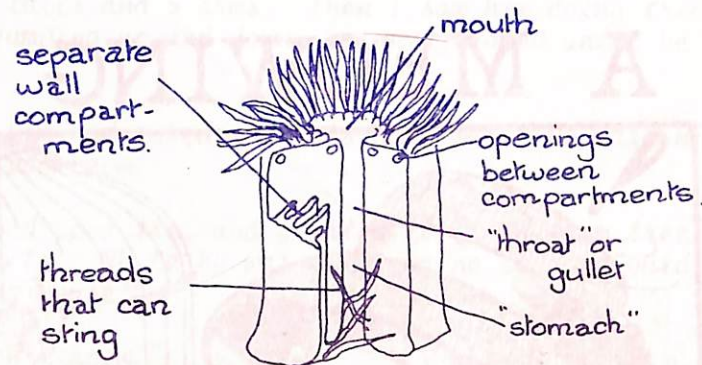


cement
from gland
attaches
animal to
rock.

ANNIE ANEMONE

in her
'flower'
garden.

Is it a
sea
flower?

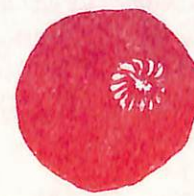
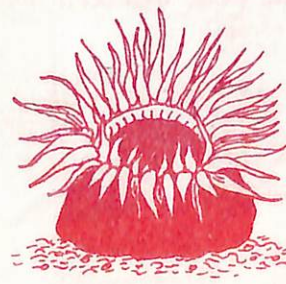


Diagram, showing some
of the inside parts of a
sea anemone.

NO an anemone is NOT a plant!

Sea anemones are soft animals, which sometimes move around a little to avoid being 'out of water'. They are 'filter feeders' like barnacles, staying put and capturing their food with their tentacles. When alarmed or out of water, they fold their tentacles in tightly, or cover themselves with sand and shell grit.

They are closely related to the coral polyp. Both possess stinging cells called nematocysts (the tentacles) which release hollow threads containing poison, when touched by a fish. Sea slugs, sea spiders, worms, fish and even sea stars and crabs will eat anemones.



Red "waratah" sea
anemones - open,
and..... closed.

These are two of the prize-winning stories written by our younger readers. Our artist Carol Measures has very kindly illustrated them for us. We hope you like them as much as we do.

A MEOWING BIRD



(A true story by Maija Nance- aged 8)

I have a very funny but pretty budgie. His name is Mr. Australia. I also have a cat called Zorba. Now, as you know, cats meow, so Zorba meows outside my budgie's cage. So, my budgie, hearing meows all the time started to meow himself!

One day an adult friend came over and sat quite near my budgie. Of course my budgie started to meow. Our friend thought it was the cat so she called Zorba! Zorba! Then she saw my budgie meowing and she was amazed (and embarrassed!)

MONCRACKEBOOMBOOM

Once while I was walking in the park, I saw an animal with 8 legs, 7 eyes, 6 tails and 5 arms. Then I saw him doing tricks round and round, jumping up and down, spinning round until he got tired.

I went up to him and asked what his name was. He said his name was Moncrackeboomboom.

Then he climbed up a tree and started to swing from tree to tree with his 6 tails. While he was swinging he said, "Could I come over to your house?"

I said, "I don't know."

He said, "Oh please let me come, please."

I said, "Oh, okay you can come."

On the way back I asked, "Could I call you Moni for short?"

"Of course you can."

"Now Moni, what do you like to eat?"

"I like fruit, vegetables, animals and most of all little boys for dessert."

When I heard that, I ran as fast as I could although he was right behind. I ran and ran but he caught me in his hand. As he was about to chew me up, I woke up and I realized it was only a dream.

Steven Woollard.



What's What

1. Barnacle
2. Anemone
3. Shrimp
4. Blue-ringed Octopus (Beware!)
5. Sea Urchin
6. Golf ball Sponges
7. Elephant Snail
8. Sargassum
9. Green Sea Velvet
10. Little Seaweed Crab
11. Common Sea Star
12. Blenny
13. Limpet
14. Periwinkle

Things to do:

* How do some animals keep wet when the rocks are dry?

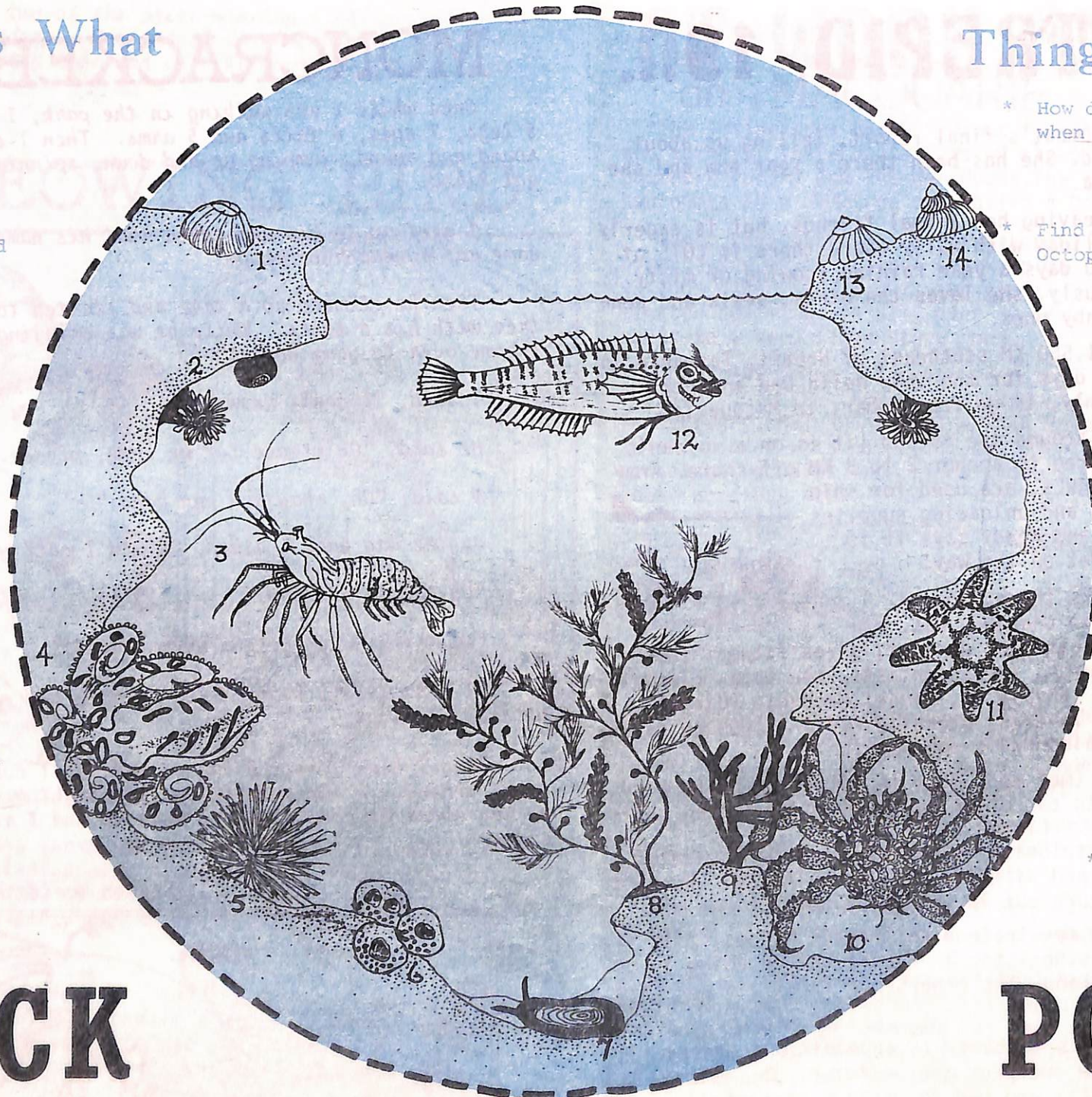
* Find out why the Blue-ringed Octopus is DANGEROUS.

* Find out all the different ways that animals move.

* Make a food chain for the plants and animals found in a rockpool.

* Find out all the different ways plants and animals have of gripping the rocks.

* Over a period of time, measure how far the tide moves between high tide and low tide levels.



ROCK

POOLS

THE INTREPID 19...

This will be Wendy Wombat's final report, telling us about life on Macquarie Island. She has been there a year now and she must return to Australia.

Wendy is sad to be leaving her animal friends, but is eagerly looking forward to a holiday with Wally where there is LOTS of sunshine! Well, with 350 days a year raining, snowing or misty... wouldn't you! But seriously, she loves the birds, seals and penguins, especially the baby ones.

Macquarie Island is 1,550 KM southeast of Hobart, Tasmania. In good weather it takes 4 days for the ship Nella Dan and her 2 helicopters secured firmly, to go from Hobart to Macquarie.

There are many reefs around the island (it is on a volcanic fault), so ships are forced to anchor 2 to 3 KM off-shore. Army * amphibious vehicles, LARCs, are used for ship to shore travel, loading and unloading supplies. Mostly the sea is rough and Wendy says it is scary ... you get VERY wet on the way!



Of the 19 expeditioners there, top of the list is the Officer in charge - OIC. The Doctor (doc), who is also the dentist, gives fitness tests and other tests for research, the Scientists, the Cook, Electrician (sparky), Carpenters (chippy's), Diesel Mechanic (dieso). The Radio Operators send Telexes, organize radio-telephone calls, a Radio Technician maintains radio equipment.

The Weather Observers (met men) work in shifts 24 hours a day. The 2 tame feral cats can often be found in or around their office. Clever cats!



A Biologist is employed by the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service - TASPWS. Doesn't that turn out to be a good name?

Two men trained as Theatre Nurses, 2 as * Anaesthetists, in Hobart before going to the island. The others had first-aid and fire courses.

These days the doctor has to have his appendix out before leaving Australia, because one year the doctor on the island became ill with appendicitis and had to operate on himself! Now just imagine that -!!

Nature Notes ... December 1984

AT WORK AND PLAY on MACQUARIE ISLAND

The living area has buildings for dining, recreation, kitchen and surgery. There are 3 lots of sleeping quarters, Garden Cove, Southern Aurora and the Hen House. The small bedrooms, 2M x 2½ Metres are called * Donga's.



Wendy says there are also workshops, powerhouses and a science block, plus various other nisson huts and prefabricated buildings, in all, over 30, from sheds to a very large store room.

Christmas comes 3 times a year to Macquarie, in the form of " airdrops". In February, May and August a RAAF Hercules aircraft flies to the island loaded with essential equipment, fresh fruit and vegetables, parcels of goodies from expeditioners families back home and that other precious item -- MAIL. You see the ship only calls once a year!



Wendy becomes very excited seeing the huge plastic wrapped pallets (loads) sway down under the parachutes. There is

a mad rush as they all run to grab the chute and lines before the wind blows the lot into the sea.

The Mid-winter dinner, June 21st, the shortest day (about 5 hrs daylight) is a special event, followed by a short performance of "Cinderella" with lots of laughs. Cinderella shaved off his beard for the occasion and donned a long wig of blonde curls!!!

Wendy helps in the 3 small glasshouses. They grow radishes, spinach, cucumbers, tomatoes, 2½ cm across and little lettuces, if you like small leaves, no head and a rather strong taste!

She has to get written permission from the OIC to bring 10 seals teeth back as a present for Wally.



Footnote. The Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition (ANARE) station on the island was established in 1948 and has been manned each year since then by scientists carrying out research in many spheres and the adaption of man to cold climates.

* Find out what these words mean.



Keep a holiday

Ringwood East primary school went on a school camp. The first night we went spotlighting for wild animals. We saw a ringtail possum, an owl, a nest and two magpies and a lot of kangaroos. Mark.

Scott.

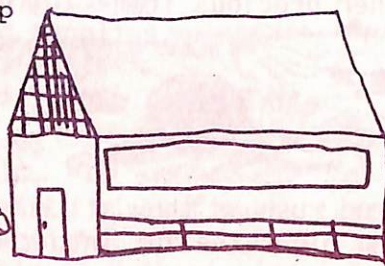
R.E.P.S.

[Ringwood East
Primary School.]

On Tuesday we went to the dairy. At the dairy we touched an electric fence. The next day we had a milk fight. I got soaked with milk and my parka smelt. Daniel

Thatcher.

On the way to Forest Lodge camp we stopped at Coal Creek. There was a mine that went through the ground. It was dark and ACE MAN. Marcus Rodaughan.



Daniel

When we went on camp, we went on a hay ride into the forest. We had a B.B.Q. with hamburgers and sausages. We also made cubbies out of old bits of bark and twigs. Nicole.

When we went to the dairy in the activity group, Barry, one of the men, saw a platypus in the lake. Tracy Webster.



When we went to Wilson's Promontory we had to take our socks and shoes off. Then we stepped in the water, and people had to take their jeans off.

Paula Nicholson.

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Tracy

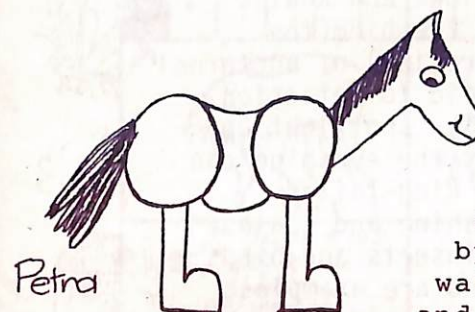
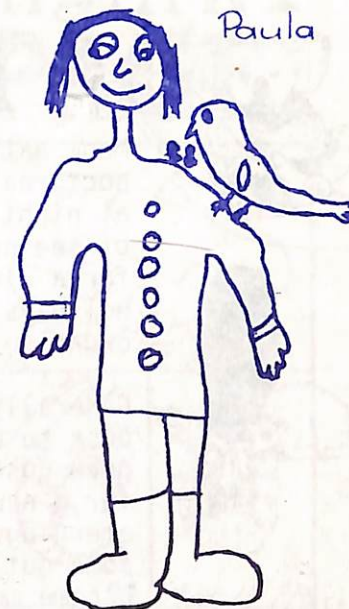
Nature Diary

On Thursday, we went to Wilson's Promontory and we walked along Squeaky Beach. We saw lots of Rosellas. Chris. McHugh.

This is Mrs. O'Connor with a parrot on her shoulder. Paula.

goes

CAMPING

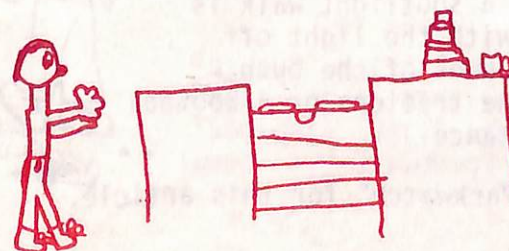
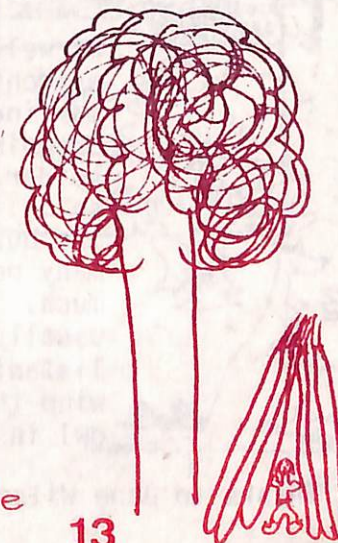


Petra

When we went to Forest Lodge we had farm activity day. We went in groups. I first went to horse riding. I liked it when I got to go by myself. We also had a bush walk and also a hayride down and back to the dairy. Petra.

When we went into the bush, we had to pretend that we were lost, and we had to make a hut. We worked in groups. Our hut was across the creek. We came second.

Travis Barber.



Nicole

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Twilight Treks & Possum Prowls



Most native Australian animals are nocturnal, that is, they are active at night. So to have the best chance of seeing these animals you must go for a night walk. During the summer holidays and Easter many rangers organise guided twilight treks.



Generally the group leaves just before dusk to do some birdwatching, but once dusk falls it's time to look out for a new set of animals which are emerging. For example, gliding possums come out of tree hollows and Koalas become more active. Eyeshine (the reflection from the retina) of nocturnal animals is a useful aid to detection. As the ranger holds the spotlight up close to his/her eyes the eyeshine can be seen from afar. Ring-tailed possums have red eyeshine and Koalas have white. Moths, insects and birds also have eyeshine and are examples of some of the animals besides mammals that can be seen.

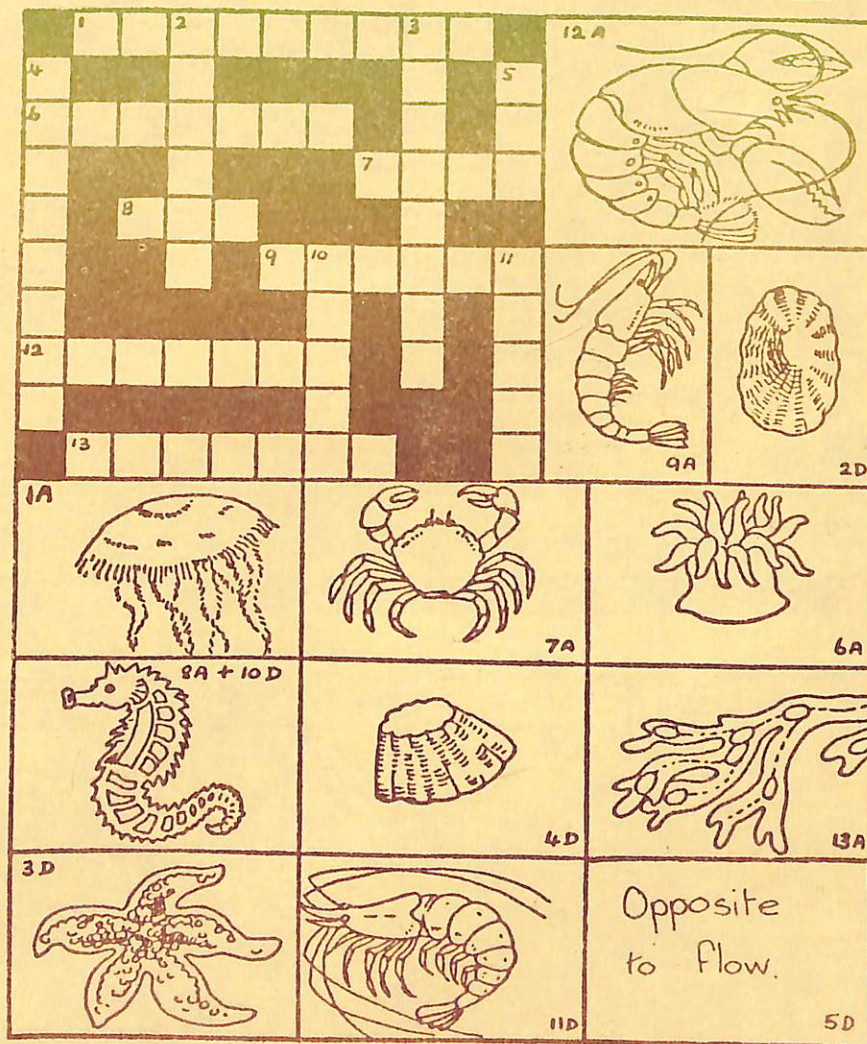


As well, signs of animals may be evident. Scratches on a tree trunk may indicate the presence of gliders. Droppings may also be present, as may spider webs, tracks, scratchings and so on. The experience of being in the bush at night is a new one for many people and most enjoy it very much. Part of a spotlight walk is usually spent with the light off listening to sounds of the bush - wind through the treetops or a Boobook owl in the distance.



Thanks to Jane Wilson and "Parkwatch" for this article.

PUZZLE PAGE



answers:

1A Jellyfish; 6A anemone; 7A crab; 8A sea; 9A shrimp; 12A lobster; 13A seaweed; 2D limpet; 3D starfish; 4D barnacle; 5D ebb; 10D horse; 11D prawn.

WINNERS

in our story writing competition are --

"Me and My Pet Dinosaur" - Emma Rattray

"Harmless Harry" - Lionel Weston

"Cows" - Peta Miles

"Zoodlewonk, My Imaginary Pet" - Rosemary Field

"Tiger" - Shayne Ward

"Starlight" - May Yeung

"The Thing" - Nicole Henry

"Moncrackeboomboom" - Steven Woollard

"My Meowing Bird!" - Maija Nance

Your prizes will arrive soon.



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