



*Toodyay Naturalists' Club Inc.*  
**THE TNC NEWSLETTER**  
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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

by Brian Foley

The meetings so far this year have been exceptional we started off with our new member Terry High giving a talk on his life as a wildlife carer for his beloved raptors and we were able to interact with Hayley the whistling kite. Terry showed a number of slides of his travels to Nepal and the raptors that habit the area. These birds are revered by the locals and control the way Nepalese run their lives.

Our next meeting was at our adopt a spot on Toodyay Road in vicinity of Morangup Reserve to collect rubbish along the road verge; this will possibly be our last pick up at this spot and if we do change all members will be notified.

The March meeting was a presentation from Greg Warburton on Ernest Giles with emphasis on the plant collecting and Toodyay History. There are also interesting Great Western Woodland and Helena Aurora Range connections, as always Greg's presentations hold great interest to the Toodyay locals and it was most interesting.

The April meeting was held in our CWA venue. Our guest speaker Keith Lightfoot enthralled all members and guests showing his life's work in the photos he has taken over the years. Keith is a very generous person in that he donates many of his photos to worthy causes and we are not talking basic photos - Keith's are world class with many winning ANZANG<sup>1</sup> awards for 2014 and 2015.

With the weather improving we will be moving into our excursions which should again hold an interest to all members, please visit our website to view the programme.

We have had a number of new members and they are welcomed into the Club and I trust they will gain an insight into our environment. If you know of persons who may be interested, bring them along as a guest at one of the meetings or excursions.

Looking forward to the next few months.

*Brian*

[<sup>1</sup>ANZANG – The Australian Geographic ANZANG 'Nature Photographer of the Year' competition celebrates the natural heritage of Australia, New Zealand, Antarctica and New Guinea bioregions each year.]

# KEITH LIGHTBODY

by Desraé Clarke

Members and friends enjoyed an hour and a half of photography education and fantastic fauna and flora images from various far flung places on this planet from dedicated, non-commercial naturalist photographer, Keith Lightbody. Throughout his presentation Keith gave many, many handy hints including that of cameras not needing to cost a fortune to result in good images - an exciting evening!

The presentation kicked off with an amusing, but very essential part of his photographic work, use of camouflage gear (see Page 7). One light-weight set consisted of headgear, a long-sleeved top and long pants with padded knee sections. The knee sections are extremely useful for kneeling on the ground to photograph tiny plants. The second outfit resembled a small tent which allowed the use of bigger gear including that of a tall tripod.

Keith visited the volcanic archipelago of the Galapagos Islands, an exceptionally harsh environment that has had relatively recent volcanic activity to which the animals have adapted. It was an interesting fact that the creatures had absolute 'right away' with the visitors having to go around the animals. Keith showed images of the Blue-footed Boobie with their very large, fluffy young, red crabs, land and marine Iguanas (extremely smelly creatures) and Sea Lions.

Continued on Page 7

Cover photo by Sandy McKay is a Wolf Spider

The spider is an adult female wolf spider carrying her many babies. This is a common sight in autumn if you go outside with a head torch (or ordinary torch if you don't have a head torch; however, you must hold the torch close to your eyes to get the reflected light back to your eyes). The myriad of glittering baby eyes are truly remarkable, like twinkling diamonds.

*John Dell APSM*

*MEMBER (AM) IN THE GENERAL DIVISION OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA*  
*Dr Neville Graeme MARCHANT*

**Neville's citation reads:**

For significant service to conservation and the environment in Western Australia, to native plant taxonomy, and to research and education.

Service includes:

Honorary Research Fellow, Kings Park and Botanic Gardens, Perth, since 2006.

Director, Western Australian Herbarium, 1996-2006 and Manager, Biological Group, 1996 and Acting Director, 1992.

**Patron, Toodyay Naturalists' Club, since 1994 and Member, since 1972 and Life Member, 1992.**

Liaison Officer, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, United Kingdom, 2001.

President, Western Australian Wildflower Society 1976-1979 and Vice-President, 1975 and Member, since 1971 and Life Member, 1997.

Committee member, Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, WA Region 1997-2007 and Western Australian Regional Secretary 2007-2014

Dr Neville Marchant joined the Toodyay Naturalists' Club Inc. (TNC) in 1972 and, together with his wife, Denise, and two children, Alicia and Marcus, has been a stalwart of the Club since that time. He was awarded Honorary Life Membership on 15 August 1992 and Patron in July 1994.

His range of presentations to the Club has included rare and endangered flora of Western Australia, plants of granite outcrops, tracing the work of early explorers and botanists, die-back problems and weed infestation. His love of taking enthusiastic amateur naturalists on excursions to reserves, national parks or camp-outs includes that of 'belly botany', a term he has coined to getting down *extremely* low to study minute plants at close range!

Neville took a position at the Western Australian Herbarium in 1970 becoming the State Herbarium Director in 1995 till his retirement in 2006. His first presentation given to the TNC was entitled 'The role of the Western Australian Herbarium and field identification of native plants'.

In 1984 he received the prestigious Churchill Fellowship allowing him to study and document the Turczinov collection of Western Australian plants, held in Kiev, and to examine specimens and literature in Moscow and St Petersburg. His talks in 1985 and 1986 on time spent in the USSR outlined some exceptionally hilarious events while negotiating a country at the time of the cold war.

The Club's 1986 publication of '*The Avon Valley: the Naturalists' View*' was greatly assisted by Neville and Denise with Denise typing the manuscript and Neville one of the official speakers at the launch.

Although he has authored many scientific papers and books a favourite for amateur naturalists is the co-authored volume, 'Flowers and Plants of Western Australia'. It is easy to read, contains beautiful photography and excellent descriptions.

James Drummond (1784-1863), the first Western Australian Government botanist, lived at 'Hawthornden', Toodyay. He searched for plants extending far north, east and south of his farming property. In 2004 a Drummond Symposium was held in Toodyay with Neville presenting a paper entitled 'The impact of James Drummond on Western Australian Botany'.

Neville's ability to educate amateur naturalists' in the mysteries of plants is second to none as he remains a humble person saying, "I just can't think of the name at the moment - can someone help me?"

The Club is honoured to have Neville as a member!

# RUBY SALT BUSH

by Dr Neville Marchant AM

In early April local community member, Sandy McKay, sent three photos of a plant found on her Toodyay property which was a mystery to her; she sought advice from our Naturalists' Club as to its identification. She stated the plant was approximately one metre in diameter and twenty five centimetres in height. It was also interesting, in her observations, to note that it grew gradually over the previous ten months but the summer heat caused it to grow more rapidly. The details of the plant and photos were sent to botanist and our Naturalists' Club Patron, Honorary Life Member, Dr Neville Marchant, and Sandy was thrilled to receive the following information from him.

“Sandra’s plant is a chenopod called Ruby Saltbush, *Enchylaena tomentosa*. This species is very widespread in Australia; the only areas where it isn’t present are the forests and woodlands close to the coast. It is common in coastal salt spray areas and on islands like Rottnest and the Abrolhos.

There are no herbarium records from Toodyay shire but this may be that it just hasn’t been recorded. It is found in Goomalling shire and Northam as well. I guess that as Toodyay is on the edge of the jarrah-wandoo zone then it is uncommon. It prefers alkaline soils and is frequent around the edge of salt lakes and clay pans and it would be easily spread by birds because of its fleshy fruit.

I have seen young plants that have a small dome-like outline then they can grow rapidly in hot months to produce a spreading shrub. Some varieties are almost prostrate; others are low, much-branched shrubs up to about half a metre.

The fleshy fruits can appear at any time of the year, they are green at first, then become yellow and some at least become red at maturity under a hot sun; hence the common name ruby saltbush; there is only one seed per fruit.

The species is sold as a bush food plant, the fleshy fruit being regarded as edible; I have eaten it and found it to be sweet and salty. However, there are reports of the leaves of plants growing on sodium chloride rich soils often being very high in calcium oxalate, the leaves have even been expected as being toxic to stock due to this chemical. I’m not sure if the fruit has the same substance, I doubt it, as it is clearly eaten and spread by birds; if it does have calcium oxalate then *Enchylaena* may not be more dangerous than rhubarb.”



Above - the whole plant



Above - the fruit

Photos: Sandy McKay

# CHITTERING LANDCARE

by Desraé Clarke

On Tuesday 15th March the Chittering Landcare Centre hosted presentations from Dr Geoff Barrett, Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPAW), Natalie Vallance, (Muchea Tree Farm), Rick Dawson, DPAW security, and Adam Peck, Birdlife WA on the Black Cockatoo species of the south west of the state.

An overview was given of the current numbers of the White-tailed Black Cockatoos, the Carnaby (short-billed) and the Baudin's (Long-billed), and the reasons for the decline of 45% from 1980 to 2000. At this point in time the Carnaby numbers are estimated at 40,000 plus and the Baudin's at between 9,000 and 12,000.

The Carnaby Cockatoo feeds on the pine nut but also that of Banksia species. It has been found that the pine nut has a food value of eight times that of the Banksia. However, with such clearing of the sandplain of Banksia the Carnaby has become dependent on the nut of the pine. The removal of the Banksia woodlands from the encroaching urban sprawl and the frequent burning of Banksia woodlands results in destruction of the stands. It has been found that the ideal burning regime of these woodlands is between fifteen and twenty years.

There is now an estimated quarter of the pine plantations remaining on the south coastal plain with the State Government planning to clear a further 23,000ha, accounting for 90% of the birds' food source, over the forthcoming thirty years. The Government's reasoning is because of the lowering below-ground water supply by the pine in the Perth Peel Region.

As a consequence of pine removal 55% of all Carnaby's food will be lost in the Perth Peel area and it is currently estimated a 45% loss of birds in the area and a 10% drop in numbers across the total south west range.

Dr Barrett stated that the two species of Black Cockatoos, the Short-billed and the Long-billed species, will not become extinct. There are two sub-populations - the southern species move north but return south to breed and the northern sub-population have an autumn/winter migration.

The aims of the Recovery Team of the Black Cockatoo are to stop further decline in the breeding population that breeding pairs remain stable and the estimation of the number of birds and proportion of juveniles and nocturnal roost sites remain steady.

The Strategic Conservation Plan is looking at the creation of 170,000ha of new conservation reserves and the planting of 5,000ha of pines which will include 116,000ha of Carnaby habitat.

Rick Dawson, of the DPAW security department over past 20 years, has had a long-term interest in the Black Cockatoo and has been involved in their banding for 46 years!! Since 2003 1,000 leg bands have involved 900 birds with banding of chicks at seven days of age. His long-term interest has been in the species of Comallo Creek, 50kms east of Jurien Bay.

Rick's observations have been that the birds live to about the mid-thirties in age, they breed between three and four years of age and 60% die within the first year mainly from Wedge-tail Eagle predation and, recently, feral cat involvement of taking the chicks out of the nest. Females of one, two and three years return to the breeding area with the flock. It has also been noted that there is successful breeding in the same natal area. There is a life-long bond of a pair and females of 25 years of age have a 100% successful breeding rate. The earliest nesting is July with the most favourable being in August.

The birds appear to require a 150 metre space for nesting and the higher the nest is placed the more success there is with breeding. Rick spoke on the artificial nests saying the ideal is to use 400mm diameter poly pipe to be 1.2m deep, with 20cm of substrata, and placed more than 4m off the ground.

For more information about the iconic Black Cockatoo go to the website -

['birdsyoullove.org'](http://birdsyoullove.org)

# TOODYAY TIDY TOWNS NATIONAL AWARDS EVENT

by Beth Frayne

Toodyay turned it on for Australian Tidy Towns awards on Friday 18 March when the Western Australian Governor, the Hon. Mrs Kerry Sanderson AO, and 150 guests from all over Australia joined Toodyay locals, including Toodyay Friends of the River (TFOR) members, in the Memorial Hall to see Tasmanian town Triabunna win the overall competition and take out the 2016 National Tidy Town Award at a gala dinner. Triabunna is an East Coast fishing and timber town brimming with innovative ideas to keep its community prospering, for which it also won the Environmental Sustainability award.

This prestigious event culminated months of local planning by 2015 National Champion, Toodyay, coordinated by the Keep Australia Beautiful National Association (KABNA) and major event sponsor the Shire of Toodyay, with the assistance of Toodyay Tidy Town (TTT) Chair Greg Warburton and the Committee.

The lead up to the event was frenetic to put it mildly. Volunteers managed to keep local roads litter-free, picking up over 100 bags along 80kms of roadside. This, combined with a concerted effort by Adopt-a-Spot groups, ensured that our interstate delegates were given a litter-free welcome to Australia's Tidiest Town.

A morning bus tour showcased the excellent projects which contributed to Toodyay's win last year, taking in the sights of West Toodyay, Majestic Heights, and Millard's Pool on the Avon River. A stop at Pelham Lookout allowed passengers time to enjoy the views and cool refreshments offered in KABWA Keep Cups. A foray down Railway Road, via the Community Depot, ended in a talk by staff at Toodyay's impressive Waste Transfer Station, which was augmented by a BinSpring product presentation by Western Australian inventors and event sponsor, the Sherrards.

Having been asked to devise the Award's Dinner table centre pieces and also a 'Favour', the Committee decided to reflect aspects of the Toodyay landscape, with the Favour being a scroll describing these aspects, and enclosing a small piece of our Toodyay Stone. Greg Warburton wrote the words for the scroll, with historical details supplied by our local historians. The scroll message was as follows:

"TOODYAY STONE is an ancient quartzite unique to the area. Its sparkling mica, varied colours and flagstone form make it sought after by stonemasons and landscapers. It features in gardens and on buildings across Australia and overseas. This stone forms the pillars of Toodyay's entry statement.

ACORN BANKSIA (*Banksia prionotes*) represents the extraordinary biodiversity of Toodyay. The plant was first collected by Toodyay pioneer, explorer and botanist James Drummond (1787-1863). In spring, spectacular wildflower displays can be seen throughout the reserves, bushland areas and roadsides.

WATER and SAND symbolises our human connection to the Avon River. Ballardong people travelling through country would throw sand into the waters as a sign of respect to the Waugyl – their spirit ancestor and creator. Europeans established their towns and farms along the Avon and its incoming tributaries. Today, local conservationists work to address the many environmental threats to our waterways.

SANDALWOOD (*Santalum spicatum*) was an economic saviour for the struggling Swan River Colony in the 1840s. Now, it is grown locally providing increasingly important commercial products such as nuts and oil.

CANDLES shine a light for our communities as we strive for a sustainable future, where generations to come will value and respect our heritage and environment."

Greg Warburton led a walk along the Bilya Track on the Saturday after the TT Event. The Committee is currently preparing a submission for the 2016 State Awards, for just one category: Heritage and Culture, as Toodyay has never won this particular Tidy Towns Award in recent years. Lots of artistic ideas have been forthcoming at recent meetings.



*Left:  
The Memorial Hall  
looked resplendent for  
the Awards Dinner  
Courtesy Angie Roe,  
KAB National*



*Right:  
Tour of Pelham  
Res.-Triabunna  
Photo: Shelley  
Kingston*

# KEITH LIGHTBODY

(from Page 2)

At this point Keith emphasised the importance of making a creature's eye the focal aspect of close-up fauna photography. He also made note to photograph a bird flying towards you rather than from you and flying into the frame and not out of it.

Keith works for a month annually with a whale-watching company in Bremer Bay, a small coastal town between Albany and Esperance, at a time when Orcas frequent the area. Although the Orca is thought to be a whale it is a member of the dolphin species. The 2016 visit was quite unique as the sandbar across the Bremer River mouth, that prevents the river water flowing into the sea, had been broken for the first time in a decade. The Orca images were stunning but, as Keith said, it is not easy to get good photographs as the sea conditions are incredibly rough and some days the boat cannot venture out because of adverse conditions. Also, not every trip over the month results in the presence of the Orca. While on shore Keith filmed the delightful small Rock Parrots and the striking vividly coloured red-billed Sooty Oystercatcher.

Wildflower photography requires a macro lens with Keith demonstrating images of tiny plants and flowers requiring his useful knee pads. He stated that it was preferable to photograph on a still day and to move about the plant to find an aspect that didn't have stems, petals or flower heads crossing one another; he gave a perfect example of a cluster of Blood Spider Orchids. Another point he stressed was to manually focus the flower to allow the background to blur and not over-ride the actual flower image. A third comment was that the enamel orchid species are extremely difficult to photograph often resulting in a less-than-perfect shot because of the shiny surface of the petals.

Photographs of the unique creatures of the Antarctic were special. Mobs of King Penguins, numbering in the thousands, the crèches of fluffy, brown young who appeared to be much larger than the parent, the Chinstrap species who constantly smile and the quaint Gentoo who steals stones from its neighbour's nest to build its own were so interesting. The spectacular Wandering, and the slightly smaller, Black-browed Albatross, the giant Elephant Seal and the cute snuffly-nosed young one and the blood spattered, carrion-eating Giant Petrels, were among the images taken on South Georgia.

Keith's special love is to capture spectacular photographs of our Black Cockatoo which may be the Carnaby, Baudin's or the beautiful Red-tailed species. His images are in high demand for publicity to highlight the plight of these endangered creatures.

The audience thoroughly enjoyed travelling to distant places with Keith and the education that came from the heart of a dedicated naturalist resulted in an interesting and sensitive presentation.

*Photographs continue on page 10*

*Photo at right: Beth Frayne*



# EARNEST GILES EXPEDITION

by Greg Warburton

EARNEST GILES WAS BORN IN ENGLAND and at the age of 15 he emigrated to Australia and in 1852 went to the Victorian goldfields obtaining valuable experience as a bushman. In 1865, he explored north-west of the Darling River looking for pastoral country. Giles did not attempt an organised expedition until 1872, when with two other men he left Chambers Pillar in Central Australia on the 22 August traversing previously unexplored country to the north-west and west. Finding their way barred by Lake Amadeus and with their horses very weak a return was made to the Finke River eventually reaching Adelaide, in January 1873.

Giles' friend, Sir Ferdinand Baron von Mueller, who was the director of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens raised a subscription so that a new expedition could be mounted. The services of William Tietkens as first assistant were obtained, and with two other men they struck out into the western desert on 4 August 1873. The country was extremely dry and it was a constant struggle to get enough water for the horses. Giles is reputed to have said during this expedition "Oh for a camel". The farthest westerly point was reached on 23 April 1874. Giles and one of the men, Alfred Gibson, had been scouting ahead when the latter's horse died. Giles gave him his own horse with instructions to follow their tracks back and obtain assistance. Giles made his way back to their depot on foot in eight days, completely exhausted only to find that Gibson had not reached the camp. A search was made for several days without success. Giles named the desert Gibson Desert after his companion. Giles was the first European to see the rock formations of The Olgas, now known by their Aboriginal name of *Kata Tjuta*, Giles supposedly discovered Uluru (formerly Ayers Rock), but was beaten to the claim by a competing explorer, William Gosse.

With the generous help of Sir Thomas Elder providing a team of camels Giles began his fourth expedition. He set out from Beltana in South Australia on the 6th of May 1875 with Tietkens again his lieutenant along with five other members including Saleh Mahomet and plant collector, Jesse Young. The party was saved the continual excursions in search of water for horses that had caused so much difficulty during previous expeditions. Towards the end of September over 323 miles (520 km) had been covered in 17 days without finding water, when on 25 September the native Tommy found an abundant supply in a small hollow between sand dunes at Queen Victoria Spring, saving their lives. After a rest of nine days the journey was resumed on 6th of October heading west. Ten days later the expedition was attacked by Aborigines and Giles was compelled to fire on them. On 4th of November they met a white stockman at Tootra out-camp, east of Bindi Bindi. Their course was west to Walebing Station, then south-west and on 11 November they arrived at New Norcia where they were welcomed by Bishop Salvado.

On the 13th of November the party arrived at Culham Farm 10 miles north of Newcastle. Samuel Phillips invited the explorers to stay and the next day they attended Culham Church. The arrival of the camel team caused much interest with people coming from across the district to view the unusual animals which had not been seen in the colony before. It was during this time that the extraordinary photographs of the expedition posing with Phillips family members and farm workers were taken at Culham. On 15 November 1875 the party arrived at Newcastle and was received by Premier John Forrest at a civic reception at what is now the Freemason's Hotel while the camels were hobbled out to feed along the river bank.

Inspired by the historic photographs taken at Culham and Toodyay's rich history I saddled up veteran of the 1996 Carnegie Centenary Expedition, Warri the Camel and walked to Culham on November 13th exactly 140 years later to commemorate the event. We were joined by fellow members of the Toodyay Historical Society, Milton and Faye Baxter, and with the three decked in period costume re-created the historic photograph by posing in the exact spot. After the photo shoot Warri and myself retraced Giles' steps into Toodyay arriving home the next day. Many thanks to Robyn and Debbie of Culham (who are direct descendants of Squire Phillips) for their welcome and support for the event.

On the afternoon of the November 18th Giles' caravan arrived in Perth to a hero's welcome and many more official engagements and ceremonies. Giles stayed for two months at Perth and on 13th of January 1876 began the return journey once again via Culham spending time with his friend Squire Phillips, now

*Continued Page 9*

## EARNEST GILES EXPEDITION (cont)

taking a course generally about 400 miles north of the last journey. He arrived at Adelaide in September 1876 completing a double crossing of the western deserts and proving beyond doubt the suitability of Camels to the outback. Giles was enthusiastic about camels and wrote *“These mighty ships of the desert by whose strength and incomprehensible powers of endurance enabled us to leave the desert behind”* E. Giles

In the 1880’s he published books of his expeditions including the iconic *Australia Twice Traversed* in two substantial volumes. He made a number of other minor journeys and his last years were spent as a clerk in the Inspector of Mines’ office at Coolgardie, where his great knowledge of the interior was always available for prospectors. Giles was made a fellow and awarded the Patron’s Gold Medal of the Royal Geographical Society in 1880. After a short illness Giles died of pneumonia in Coolgardie on 13 November the same date that he had triumphantly arrived at Culham 22 years before. He is buried at the Coolgardie Cemetery.

*He has left behind a name that will be long remembered and held in honor as one who had devoted the best years of his life to one of the noblest causes that man can engage”.*<sup>[8]</sup>

H. H. Finlayson in *The Red Centre: man and beast in the heart of Australia* (1935) said of Giles:

*“All who have worked in that country since Giles’s time have felt both admiration and astonishment at the splendid horse craft, endurance, and unwavering determination with which these explorations were carried through”*

Ernest Giles will always hold a special and important place in Toodyay history and it was an honour to commemorate his historic arrival in our town 140 years ago.

The Eastern centric Australian Geographic last issue featured a list of “Australia’s 50 greatest Explorers”; incomprehensibly Ernest Giles is not included! Or indeed any of the great western desert explorers like John Forrest, David Carnegie and Edgerton-Warburton.



Photo: Robyn Yost



Photo: Robyn Yost

Above:  
*The 2016 re-enactment. L to R—Fay Baxter, Greg Warburton and Milton Baxter (mounted on the camel)*

Left: *Greg Warburton (kneeling), Milton and Fay Baxter at Culham*

## WESTERN BEARDED DRAGON

*Text: John Dell APSM*

*Photos: Sharon Richards*

Western Bearded Dragon. About November/December the females excavate a short burrow in fairly exposed areas to deposit their eggs. She will then cover the burrow with soil. The heat from the sun warms the soil and incubates the eggs which usually hatch late January/February. A great opportunity for Sharon to keep an eye on the site and hopefully see the babies emerge.

The burrow has to be just right and the female will often commence several and abandoning them before she settles on the right one.



# PHOTOGRAPHER'S PAGE



Photo by Keith Lightbody

Photo: Sharon Richards



Many Nat's members will remember the wonderful presentation given by Philippa Nikulinsky as guest speaker in August 2012. Philippa brought with her the two five-metre long rice-paper scrolls of botanical drawings based on the regeneration of the bush after the fires in Eneabba. With the aid of volunteers wearing white gloves the scrolls were unravelled for all to see. Philippa and husband, Alex, brought with them books and delightful cards for sale to members and art lovers.

**Philippa's citation read:**

*For significant service to the visual arts as a botanical painter and illustrator, to professional associations, and as an author.*

Service includes:

Botanical Artist, since 1970s.

Illustrated the cover of 'Landscape' magazine, Western Australian Department of Parks and Wildlife, 1990-2012.

Illustrated the Australian Wildflower Collection, Australian Fine China, 1995 - 2005.

Member, Botanical Artists Group of Western Australia, since 1991.

Patron, West Australian Guild of China Painters, current.

Honorary Patron, Kwongan Foundation for the Conservation of Australia's Biodiversity, current.

Author and/or co-author of a range of publications including:

'Cape Arid', with A. Nikulinsky, 2012.

'Soul of the Desert', with S. Hopper, 2005.

'Life on the Rocks; The Art of Survival', with S. Hopper, 1999.

'Banksia Menziesii', 1992.

Illustrator, Volumes 8 and 22, 'Flora of Australia', 1982 and 1984.

'Wildflowers of the Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia', 1983.

'Western Australian Wildflowers in Watercolour', 1980.

Is the namesake of the orchid 'Cyanicula nikulinskyae'

The Toodyay Naturalists' Club members were thrilled to read of Philippa's recognition and sent best wishes to her; she responded with a lovely card.



Photo by Keith Lightbody

## *Idnya and Virda translocations to the McDonald Ranges, SA* *by Desraé Clarke*

THE TRANSLOCATION of creatures that, until the 1880s frequented the lower Australian continent, is continuing to demonstrate positive results.

### Idnya

In April 2015 a further 37 Idnya, the name given by the Adnyamathanha peoples of the area to their totem [Western Quoll], was added to the original 41 released in 2014.

In September 2015 the breeding results were appearing to be progressing very well. When trapping the females to remove their radio collars five and six pouch young per female were found.

Trapping the Idnya requires getting up at 4.30am to check the traps prior to sunup and the heat of the day. In the evening there is a return to bait and reset the traps.

The Idnya were captured from 48 of the 172 trap sites across 7 trap lines indicating a good spread throughout the release areas.

In December 2015 second generation Idnya, numbering 27, were captured as grandchildren of the original 2014 release.

### Virda

In July 2015 a further release of endangered animals of the region occurred with 79 Brushtail Possums, (Virda), translocated from the Australian Wildlife Conservancy Yookamurra Sanctuary. This sanctuary, of 5,200ha with a 1,100ha feral-free fenced area, lies between the Barossa Valley and the Murray River.

Following good rains and the areas showing green lush growth the animals were released with the females carrying small pouch young to enable recruitment into the first year population. The original pouch young have been raised successfully to pouch exit. All recent captured females have new pouch young.

28 Brushtail Possums have been radio-collared and will be monitored over the summer months of movement, use of springs and survival. They are monitored by an Honours student from the University of Adelaide to look at movement, home range interaction and feeding on the mallee leaf tips.

### Feral Cat Control

With young of both the Idnya and Virda dispersing feral cat periodic control would increase from October to December.

A male cat that has been caught on camera since May 2014, and known as 'White Tip', has been successfully trapped. This animal weighed 6.2kg!

## *DID YOU KNOW...*

... the following story has similarities to what regularly happens at our '*Adopt-a-Spot*' litter site.

A 30 year old Dawesville man pleaded guilty in April to dumping items (including soiled nappies) at a local service station.

The Keep Australia Beautiful Council of Western Australia (KABCWA) investigated camera surveillance, which captured the offender discarding a boot-load of items - including the nappies and other household waste, along with motor vehicle parts and empty spray cans - at a Dawesville service station.

KABC WA Investigators identified the offender through his vehicle licence plate, shown in the footage taken in November last year.

Mandurah Magistrates Court ordered the offender to pay a \$500 fine on Tuesday, along with \$278 in costs. "The fact that we've got people dumping items like dirty nappies in our State means it's crucial that the community works with us to tackle this behaviour", said KABCWA Chair, Michael Aspinall.

2015/2016 has already seen KABC WA issue **nearly 2,400 littering infringements** totalling \$333,417 in Western Australia, with one prosecution case now before the courts.

In 2014/2015, KABC WA also issued nearly **4,000 littering infringements totalling \$701, 212.**

**Maximum penalties for littering are \$5000 for individuals and \$10,000 for corporations.**

# ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

## What is your cat up to?

An interesting article has been received of research into the wanderings of cats after dark with the use of Global Positioning Systems (GPS) tracking from the University of South Australia's Discovery Circle project.

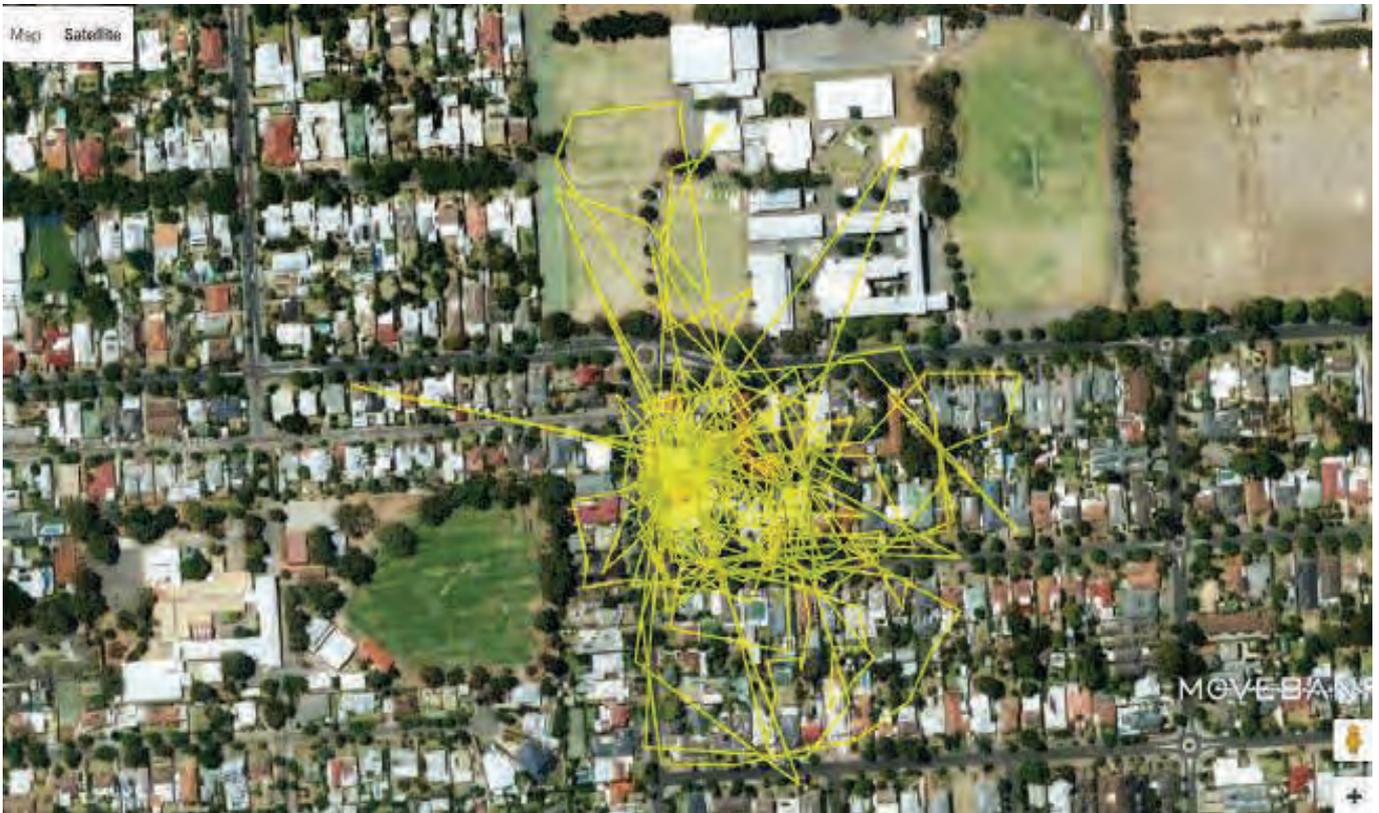
With the use of the new GPS tracker a seven year old tom's wanderings after dark provided some interesting data. A family cat by the name of 'Pippin' visited a house two doors from his own residence, explored the local high school and traversed dozens of rooftops in the suburb of his home.

Other cat data discovered some felines travel only a short distance while others explore much wider areas. The GPS tracking's (yellow lines) in the image below are those of Pippin.

What is your cat up to?

To view the *Cat Tracker Project* go to [www.discoverycircle.org.au](http://www.discoverycircle.org.au)

[Kind permission to use the image below was given by Project leader, Dr. Philip Roetman]



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