Central North Field Naturalists

CNFN *the* Natural News

Oct -Nov 2000

Patron - Dennis Morris

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Walks

SATURDAY 9:30 am November 11, Steve Cronin's property 234 Frankford Rd. Exeter. Steve is an Environmental Consultant and he has prepared a management plan for his bush block. Part of the block is wet and may require gum boots. Rare plants including *Brunonia*. Steve is kindly providing a BBQ. Bring a plate to share.

Sunday 10 am November 12, Plant Identification field day. Outlook Mt Roland and the Understory Network invite you to attend. Meeting Point: 105 O'Neills Rd. (off Claude Rd. at Gowrie Park. Guest Speakers Richard Donaghey (Land for Wildlife) and Richard Barnes (Botanist).

Sunday November 19, 5 pm Our AGM & BBQ and Entertainment at the Weegena Hall. A short AGM will be followed by a meal. BBQ plate available Please bring something to pass, and whatever you want to eat or BBQ and drink. Afterwards, Ron & Sarah will make an aural presentation on **"The Language of Birds"**

Proposed future excursions—your suggestions are welcome

December 3, Mt. Roland
January 7, Cradle Mountain
February Penguin shelf
March Kelsey Tier

Blackberries, Environmental Weed or Habitat?

By Martyn Ewings

Rubus fruticosus is the common blackberry found throughout many parts of southern Australia and the bane of many Tasmanian farmers' lives. My observations are that blackberries are a very invasive and adaptable plant that may live in a wide variety of habitats, such as wetlands, riparian zones, temporary water courses, well drained slopes and even the suburban back fence (although seemingly absent from alpine areas and deep within old growth forest).

Along with its original sponsor, *Homo sapiens*, blackberries have invaded native forests. An "innocent" act of mass disturbance by a bulldozer within a native forest (clear felling), followed by the abundance of light creates a perfect seed bed. All that is now required are complimentary bird droppings containing stratified blackberry seed and voilà – blackberry infestation! Disturbance of the soil by mechanical means or fire only seems to encourage these thorny clumps to sucker more. With plantations aplenty throughout this state, expect blackberries to be one of the many weeds coming to a tree farm near you.

So, for farmers and the tidy-minded, spraying of herbicides are often used to rid areas of blackberries, although to achieve 100% success at eradication, follow up spraying may be required for years after. For only one sucker need survive and re-establishment is under way.

I've lived amongst these so called degraded pastured areas often referred to as unmanaged wastelands for several years now. This land I

believe to have been cleared earlier this century, while leaving a few remnant pockets of native vegetation on the pieces of ground unsuitable for farming, i.e. too wet or steep. Pasture must have originally been sown to be used for grazing, but over the years for whatever reason the land was left to its own devices and the stocking rate reduced to a few cattle and sheep.

This is when we arrived and proceeded to watch the blackberry clumps expand so that they almost link up those areas of remnant native vegetation. Over the years I have walked amongst these thickets and have noted the following animal species have found refuge in or used these blackberry clumps as travelling corridors: Rabbits, Eastern Barred Bandicoots, Dusty Antechinus, Swamp Rats, Tasmanian Pademelons, Red-necked Wallabies, Feral Cats, Black Ducks nesting, nesting Calamanthus, Scarlet Robins, Superb Fairy Wrens suspected to be nesting, Tasmanian Native Hens, Green Rosellas, House Sparrows, European Goldfinches, Copperheads and Tiger snakes. Also hunting above blackberries are Grey Goshawks (white morph), Brown falcons, Australian Owlet-nightjars, and Swamp Harriers. I also suspect several other species of animals to use these blackberries i.e. Silvereyes, Water Rats and platypus near the water courses, Brown Rats, Long-nosed Potoroos, Southern Brown Bandicoots, Spotted-tailed Quolls (lost chickens one night in a bloody mess) and possibly more.

Considering our house is not in the bush and is at least 500 metres from the nearest large tract of bush this number of species in close proximity to our dwelling astounds me. I can only assume that blackberry thickets are somewhat like the tight understorey that was once found on this now cleared but "derelict" farm land. The wildlife has quickly carved a niche within this human mistake (blackberry introduction) showing the true resolve and perhaps growing necessity of Tasmanian wildlife to adapt to a changing environment. This survival against man's gallant efforts to keep them at bay gladdens me so!

Now if these weeds (habitat) were to be removed and only pasture re-established, I fear our link to the distant bush would disappear along with this diverse list of wildlife. Then we would be surrounded by what I consider to be a true wasteland!

In a perfect world things would be different, i.e. native re-vegetation, but until then I'll treasure this habitat. What's more the fruit can be delicious.

Fungi 2000

by Sarah Lloyd

I started seriously collecting fungi at Black Sugarloaf in May this year. It was the day after our autumn field trip to the Mount Careless area where we soon filled a lunchbox with fungi which Ron brought home to identify. Fortunately an extension to our house had just been completed and soon all available surfaces in the room were covered with fungi laid out on sheets of paper so the colour of the spore print could be observed. More by accident than design, this light and sunny room was perfect for air-drying specimens (which once dry, were placed on a card in a plastic zip-lock bag to await further examination).

I guess, as a fabric artist, it was the enormous variety of shapes, textures and colours that initially sparked my interest. But it was only when reading more about these amazing organisms and the role they have in the environment that I started to appreciate their significance. Did you know that "without [the activities of fungi] life on the earth would be seriously run down in 20-25 years and would slowly cease"? (Fuhrer and Robinson 1992)

Another intriguing aspect of fungi is the ephemeral and unpredictable nature of their fruiting time. Fungi are ever present in the environment but are mostly made up of invisible hyphae—microscopic thread-like structures. The fruiting bodies appear only periodically to give us a hint of this vast subterranean life.

But it was the element of surprise that really got me hooked! Nearly every morning, and often within meters of the house new fungi would appear. The colours of the stipe, cap and gills/pores were in some species beautifully coordinated, in others starkly contrasting, such as in *Dermocybe austro-veneta* with its bright green cap and lemon yellow gills.

Next came the overnight wait for the colour of the spore print which separates specimens into families. In some species the spores are released quickly and will leave a pattern that is a sharp representation of the tiers of lamellulae (gills). Some species release their spores slowly leaving a beautifully shaded print.

Together with the bacteria, fungi are the decomposers in the environment. Neither plant nor animal, fungi (which were until recently regarded as part of the botanical kingdom) are now placed in a kingdom of their own. Unlike plants, fungi lack chlorophyll so must obtain energy from other sources. They have a variety of life modes. Some are **saprotrophic**—extracting nutrients from decaying organic matter. Some are **parasitic** on plants or animals. The rest are **mycorrhizal**—in which case modified roots known as mycorrhiza provide the

means for carbohydrates and sugars to move from plant to fungus while soil nutrients and water move from fungus to plant. 97% of plant species have this symbiotic or mutually beneficial relationship with fungi and the mycorrhizal fungi thus play an important role in maintaining the health of plant communities.

Considering their importance, it is surprising that so little is known about fungi in Australia. FUNGIMAP aims to address this lack of baseline data.

FUNGIMAP is a scheme to map the distribution of 100 species of Australian mushrooms, toadstools and other fungi using the information sent in by a network of volunteer recorders across Australia. The project commenced in 1995 with eight target species, soon expanded to 50 with a further 50 added in 1999.

I didn't hear about FUNGIMAP until March 2000 and when I received the list of the 100 target species a few weeks later realised very quickly that I knew almost nothing about the subject. However, a few of us had decided that 2000 would be the year to seriously investigate mycology and the FUNGIMAP project gave me added incentive to learn. I was greatly encouraged when the very first mushroom I found was a target species, the "rooting shank" *Xerula australis*, right under the clothes line! Between May 8th and when we left for the mainland on 20th June I found 16 target species on Black Sugarloaf, and a further two at several different locations in the semi-arid zone on our travels.

We experienced a fairly wet autumn at Black Sugarloaf this year—ideal weather for the fruiting of many species. A daily walk to a different habitat yielded a bucket full of specimens and the collection soon numbered over 150 specimens. As a fungi novice the whole experience became somewhat overwhelming! To add to my sense of frustration, I was without the necessary microscope (100x) which is needed to examine microscopic features such as spores etc,—the only sure way of determining genus and species in many cases. And there is no comprehensive guide to fungi in Australia so I had to rely on photographs and drawings in the various books we have accumulated to assist in identification. The books from Great Britain (see references) were very helpful—fungi is a universal sort of subject, maybe because of the extent to which it involves people's stomachs!

Some of the books had a key, but as approximately 80% of fungi in Australia are yet to be found, let alone named, many of the species didn't quite fit and it soon became clear that the best I could hope for was to assign most specimens to a family or genus. Taste and smell, as well as macro and microscopic features, can play an important role in fungi identification. One fungimap target, *Cortinarius albidus*, has a distinct curry-like odour and the immediately peppery flavour of the coral fungi *Clavicorona piperata* is characteristic of that species. Retention of colour on drying is another important feature to observe. I thought I had found the beautiful blue cortinar *Cortinarius rotundisporus* several times, but it was only once—the other ones turned brown on drying.

Similarly, I thought I had found the *Hygrocybe conica* until I really did find it—it started turning black immediately on being handled.

My disappointment at having to leave Black Sugarloaf in what was a fantastic year for fungi for our trip to south-west Queensland was short lived, as the semi-arid zone had also experienced much rain over the preceding months stimulating the production of many fruiting bodies, two of which were fungimap targets.

Spring is not a great time for fungi, but several species (rather than several buckets full) appear each week which is about the pace I can cope with. I have so far catalogued 171 species from Black Sugarloaf this year and specifically identified 35. There are obviously many question-marks. Interestingly, not one member of the bolete family has appeared, and I seem to remember an abundance of bolete species last year.

We recently found the strange looking false Morel *Gyromitra esculenta*. This species is widely eaten in Europe, normally without ill effect. Occasionally, however, they cause severe poisoning and may even be fatal. This is probably due to the active ingredient, monoomethylhydrazine (an ingredient of rocket fuel), not being sufficiently evaporated by cooking. Like some other fungi toxins, this insidious poison can have a delayed effect, symptoms only appearing hours, sometimes days after ingestion by which time severe and irreversible damage has occurred to vital organs such as kidneys or liver.

Meanwhile, while I anticipate the frenzy of next autumn, I have tracked down a microscope and look forward to exploring the microscopic world of spores, basidia, trama and clamp connections of those species I've collected thus far—the pink geometrically-shaped spores of the family *Entolomataceae* sound especially fascinating. What a wonderful world!

References

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Lake Bindegolly (20-26/7/2000)

by Ron Nagorcka

We are camped about 20 metres from the current shoreline of Lake Bindegolly in SW Queensland. Every tenth year or so there is no shoreline here at all, the lake is dry—but this year it is almost full. We walked past old fences stretching way out in the water one morning, and it is teeming with birds. "Bird heaven" to quote Sarah. Occasionally, the soft whirring of many wings will alert you to a flock of Cormorants (Pied and/or Black and/or Great) directly overhead. They are here in their thousands to judge by the numbers that go back and forth each day. Crested Terns pass by—heads down examining the water for fish. Occasionally a Brolga slowly flies past emitting an honk. Large flocks of ducks feed between the shoreline and the drowned Lignum *Muehlenbeckia* sp. which hides the Little Grassbirds emitting their plaintive musical cry.

Where the road (a major sealed highway to Thargomindah and beyond) crosses through the middle of the lake there is a causeway and bridge causing a bottleneck in the already narrow lake. The area is well vegetated and there are birds literally everywhere. Ducks and Grebes honk and carry on. Great-crested Grebes and Hoary-headed Grebes have both been seen with chicks, and allow observation at close quarters. A Clamorous Reed Warbler entertains us all as it goes about establishing its territory (prime territory Sarah conjectured as the others of its species nearby were not nearly as loud). Whistling Kites and Swamp Harriers patrol the skies. It was 6 days before we sighted a Wedge-tailed Eagle—pretty unusual in these parts, where they always seem to be around. It looked magnificent—close and low over some nearby trees.

Other notable sightings have been a Peregrine Falcon, a Sacred Kingfisher, Pelicans and the wonderfully unusual Pink-eared Duck , which to quote Pizzey is a "poorly named small duck with huge, square-tipped grey bill and strongly brown-barred flanks ..... white forehead and face with clown-like dark brown patch over eye"—a truly amazing sight.

Pink-eared Duck

Lake Bindegolly is on an ancient fault line and is the central lake of a small independent catchment. (Only 50k to the east and you're in the Murray-Darling basin.) It fills up from both ends and is very long and narrow. Hence birds feed close to the edges, making it heaven for bird-watchers and bird-recordists as well as for birds. Swans for instance make a series of lovely little social honks but are usually very difficult for the recordist to get close enough to as they are very shy—in Tasmania anyway. But here, while they are wary, we've been within a few metres of feeding swans.

At night, the place can be quite noisy—especially when the moon comes up. Don't waterbirds ever sleep? And it is difficult, if not impossible to put a name to all the sounds in the time we have. There will be many question marks in my notes when I listen to the recordings I've made. One night something landed and vocalised in the tree above our tent—it sounded a bit like a Brown falcon but according to Pizzey, Owlet Nightjars—which may be quite plentiful over the whole continent, but are seldom seen—sound similar.

Australian Owlet-nightjar

Just over a small rise from the lake there is a small swamp.This is usually dry but is now covered in a few inches of muddy water—Heron heaven! There are also lots of Magpie-larks and Common Bronzewings. One morning I was recording next to this swamp when 4 emus plodded slowly through the swamp to within about 3 metres of me to check me out—they are justly famed for their curiousity. Unfortunately, the only vocalisation they managed during this whole exercise (which I was recording) was one short grunt!

According to the information provided at the picnic spot on the road, there are Fat-tailed dunnarts, Stripe-faced dunnarts and a species of Planagale (all very small carnivorous marsupials in the same family as Quolls and Tasmanian Devils *Dasyuridae*) in the samphire which grows all through the muddy to dry edges of the lake. We didn't see them of course (it was 10 years on Black Sugarloaf before we saw a White-footed Dunnart—they are that cryptic!), but we did see some suspicious little burrows. The evidence of pest mammals such as rabbits is plentiful and there are many feral pigs which dig ruthlessly all over the place.

We are occasionally entertained by a pair of Southern White-faces nesting in the large Acacia next to our camp. One of them will bring a bit of nesting material—usually grass—to the tiny cavity formed between two branches, while the other keeps watch on a nearby branch. These tiny birds, about the size of thornbills, could hardly be competition for anything, but they were occasionally chased by Yellow-throated Miners.

Southern Whiteface

In general there are not as many birds in the surrounding countryside here as there were at Penaroo (see article in the last Newsletter) despite the amount of water. This seems due to a lack of Eucalypts and flowering Eriemophillas. The dominant tree is *Acacia ammitophylla* which is in fact very rare and occurs just here and one other locality.

Interestingly, we have seen or heard no frogs here which seems strange. There is also no sign of tadpoles around the edges of the lake. On the other hand there are multitudinous small spiders—in the car, in the water or on one's coffee cup. Sarah also reports some big spider-like legs in a spider-like hole. Other inverterbrates include moths with extraordinarily long antennae, enormous dragon flies and Bag moths. When the temperature is right there are huge clouds of mosquitos—fortunately it has mostly been too cold for them.

It took a while but Sarah finally found a Birds nest fungus on our sixth morning—this time not on dung, but at the base of a dead Dodonea bush. Again there are various Tulostoma (puffballs with stalks) species, but we have not come across *Podaxis pistillaris*.

Postcript:

In my "Postcard from Queensland" in the last newsletter I mentioned a mystery screech which I managed to record at Gunderbooka. This has now been positively identified as a fox by members of the Launceston Field Naturalists.

It is also worth relating our last night at the Penaroo shearers quarters when we stayed up late to see a wonderfully clear total eclipse of the moon and heard what we always refer to as the "wooda-wooda" bird, or Spotted Nightjar. Wooda-wooda—which describes the call perfectly—is the name we learnt from an Aruntа man near Alice Springs some years ago.

Spotted nightjar

On the same eventful evening we observed a magnificent large frog covered with iridescent spots. Unfortunately we had no means of identifying forgs—just how big a library can a Subaru cope with?

Launceston Environment Centre

The LEC has halved its membership rates this year! You can now become a member for only $5. So, given this fine encouragement, why else should you join?

If you haven't visited the LEC lately, it has moved to 226 Charles St. These premises offer an ideal space, with a front room for displays, distribution info and activities, a middle room for the office/library and a third room for meetings or a quiet place to study. With CNFN member Peter Sims OAM at the helm as president, the LEC is firmly establishing itself as the Northern Region Community Environmental Resource Centre.

Unfortunately, the LEC has been the subject of several cutbacks in its funding base. In spite of this hardship, the LEC has continued to function as a community base and as a voice on environmental issues. But it needs the help of those who CARE! The $5 membership is the best bargain around. Even if you don't use the Centre, it can use your support. So, stop in and see the premises (limited volunteer opening hours at the moment), and either join there or send $5 single or $10 family to:

> The Treasurer, Launceston Environment Centre Inc., 226 Charles St., L'ton 7250 along with your details. Donations are also most welcome.

Jim's scraps

Biological Control - Substituting One Problem for Another?

Everyone hails biological insect controls as the environmentally friendly way to deal with pests. Right? Well, **New Scientist** (15 Jan. 2000) reports how "biocontrol" can sometimes substitute one plague for another. In the past few years there have been a number of reports of good bugs turning bad. Some of the released environmental warrior insects have gone AWOL, and have established themselves in new niches where they can munch native plants or muscle in on insect species. Hundreds of exotic organisms have been released into new environments in the name of biological control, and occasionally they have become the new "cane toads".

The problem seems to be the increasing reckless releases, which become "A hideous ecological lottery" according to one researcher. No right-minded government would consider bringing in foreign vertebrate species to fight pests these days, but the attitudes towards introducing invertebrates can be "positively cavalier" say some critics. The U.S. has made it a national goal to use biologically based forms of pest control under Clinton, and this policy has apparently produced some pretty flawed attitudes based on profits rather than biology.

To release a biocontrol agent in the U.S., you are supposed to do all of the relevant testing which can take up to eight years. Except, the USDA can grant permits "if any potential risk to a non-target plant is outweighed by the cost posed by the pest plant"!? Worse than that sop to agricultural profits, insects released to fight other insects need not be tested at all, since if they go astray they're unlikely to damage anything of "commercial importance". And it even gets worse. Often many insect species are released against the same pest, hoping that at least one will do the job. Nor is any long-term tracking of ecological impact required to be carried out.

As you might expect, there are now many documented cases of the biological control agents getting out of control. A number have moved on from pest plants to native plants, some of which are threatened species that suddenly have a new and added threat that could send them to the brink.

The demands for biocontrol measures to be much more regulated and rigorously tested for collateral damage meets the usual rationalist arguments of high costs. It also presents the dilemma that a greater use of chemical pesticides will accompany any slow down of biological control methods.

However, there is a risk and an irony here that biocontrols could end up becoming as environmentally unacceptable as pesticides if they begin to lose the public's trust by creating damage in fragile systems, and if they end up being serious new pests.

Biocontrols seem to represent such great promise that it would indeed be a pity if we were to lose them as a tool through short-sighted grabs for profits. Is there nothing besides profits that motivates the world any more?

The World's Most Successful Mammal?

Requirements: Non-offensive, sustainable, adaptable, exercises population control, and is able to survive under adverse conditions

Well, obviously we have eliminated the first species that probably came to your mind on just about every point. An article in the EXAMINER (13 Sept) have scientists in London nominating the echidna as the world's most successful mammal.

The echidna has been on earth for about 120 million years. It was here with the dinosaurs, and managed to survive the asteroid or the bad karma that wiped them out. Nothing could be less offensive, it never overpopulates, it cultivates the soil, it can survive climate fluctuations and hopefully – humans.

Draft Recovery Plan Made Into a Farce

by Bill Thomas

The last meeting of the Astacopsis Recovery Team was on the 26th May 2000. This meeting was called by the Chair of the Recovery Team Warwick Nash (Deputy Director Inland Fisheries) in response to objections by Penny Wells (Forestry Tasmania) to wording of the Plan produced by the former chair Jean Jackson (Inland Fisheries). When I questioned Warwick Nash as to the need to have this meeting rather than continue with the Plan as it stood, which was clearly an option (Inland Fisheries being the lead agency in the recovery of this species), I was told that if we didn't voluntarily have a meeting to resolve this issue the "Minister" would direct us to have a meeting.

The meeting of the 26th was long and laboured, to do with specific wording in the "Strategies" and "Recovery Actions" sections of the Plan. Essentially it was resolved that in the Strategies section of the Plan the particular wording would be: "**This indicates to the Recovery Team that buffer strips of at least 30m may be required on each side of class 2, 3 & 4 streams where *A. gouldi* is known to occur locally or immediately downstream to minimise the impacts on *A. gouldi* during and after logging operations**". The wording "may be required" was accepted by all present for this section of the plan. There is no definitive scientific work specifically dealing with a combination of buffer strips on small streams(class 3 & 4) and Astacopsis, however there is clear evidence in the Tasmanian situation that buffers less than 30m on larger streams (class2) do in fact impact on instream biota, and researchers have found juvenile Astacopsis in class 4 streams.

The wording of the Recovery Actions section of the Plan dealt with on the 26th May was "**As discussed the Recovery Team considers that buffer strips of at least 30m should be implemented on each side of class 2, 3 & 4 streams where *A. gouldi* is know to occur locally or within 2km downstream, to minimise impacts on *A. gouldi* during and after logging operations**". This was endorsed by all members of the Recovery Team except for the Forestry Tasmania representative who objected to the wording "should be implemented"; the objection was on the basis that there was no supporting evidence and the wording was prescriptive. The argument supporting the majority view was that the Recovery Team had a duty to recommend measures of protection for the species.

I believe the Recovery Team wanted to make it clear that until scientific evidence proved otherwise, this is what the Team thought was necessary, or likely to be necessary, to protect this species in forested areas. Informing this decision were the following factors laid out to the Recovery Team members over the last four years:

- the species is listed as threatened,
- the species is a priority forest dwelling species under the RFA,
- there is a clear perception the species is in decline and has been for a long time,
- habitat disturbance is clearly one of the causal agents of this decline, and production forests within the range of the lobster contain some of the best remaining habitat,
- attempts to protect the species through reservation to date have been unsuccessful,
- available evidence suggests that additional protection to that currently prescribed in the Forest Practices Code is required,
- there is a requirement to be precautionary when there is a lack of scientific understanding of exactly the effects of the causal factors as is the case with this species.

The Recovery Team was respectful of the dissenting view of the Forestry Tasmania representative and accordingly agreed to append the statement that not all Recovery Team members agreed to specific wording in the Actions Section of the Plan.

The Director of The Department of Primary Industry, Water and Environment has now put the Recovery Plan out for public comment (closing on the 27th. Oct. 2000). To the utter consternation of some team members the Director has both removed the footnote and overturned the Team's recommendation in the Recovery Actions section of the Plan. The wording in the Recovery Actions section is now "**As discussed the Recovery Team considers that buffer strips of at least 30m may be required on each side of some class 3 & 4 streams where A. gouldi is known to occur locally or within 2km downstream, to minimise impacts on A. gouldi during and after logging operations**". The Director has misrepresented the majority view of the Team and coincidentally worded the Plan much as sought by Forestry Tasmania.

The change of wording from "should be implemented" to "may be required" in the Actions Section may seem slight but in one stroke of the pen the Plan becomes completely discretionary. This discretionary wording takes much of the pressure off land managers to justify their destruction of riparian habitat on headwater streams where Astacopsis is known to occur. It is now arguable that The Giant Freshwater Lobster Recovery Plan is more of a Research Plan than a Recovery Plan. As part of

the Regional Forest Agreement, the Giant Freshwater Lobster Recovery Plan is also required to be adopted at a Commonwealth level. For Commonwealth adoption a Recovery Plan needs to "specify the actions needed to satisfy the recovery criteria, identify and specify the actions needed to protect the habitats that are critical to the survival of the species or community." (Recovery Plan Guidelines A.N.C.A. 1995.).

As if to give extra credibility to the Draft Plan being put out for public comment, the DPIWE states that this Plan "is a revised and updated version of the 1997 Plan prepared and submitted to the Commonwealth" under the Regional Forest Agreement. Whilst acknowledging receiving copies of the original 1997 Plan, Environment Australia, and the Minister for Environment and Heritage, Senator Hill, both deny that the Plan was ever formally submitted. The fact is that the Plan languished for almost two years in the offices of the Parks and Wildlife Service, supposedly because it was thought the budget estimates were too high and one of the actions (cessation of recreational fishing) needed rewriting.

As a community member involved with the Recovery Team since February 1997 I must say that it has been a most frustrating experience. Worse is that the government agencies involved don't seem to know or understand the various Acts and Agreements that deal with this species, the process for developing recovery plans seems unclear to all, and the Recovery Plan Guidelines appear not to be followed. Concern about this species has been expressed for quite a number of years now; the forestry industry has always been quickly defensive, but never quick to objectively assess impacts or protective measures to do with this species. New research projects will yield more definitive answers. I would only hope that other recovery plans in this State are not dealt with in a similar manner.

Kim Evans, Director National Parks and Wildlife
GPO Box 44A
Hobart Tas. 7001

Re: Draft Recovery Plan for Astacopsis gouldi

Dear Sir

According to our correspondence with the Threatened Species Unit Manager, the Draft Recovery Plan for *Astacopsis gouldi* had the key measure of habitat protection using stream buffers changed by you. Stream buffers were a long and protracted issue with the Recovery Team, but in the end the Recovery Plan guidelines dictated that actions be recommended that would abate the threatening processes and ensure habitat protection for the species. The stream buffer recommendations were the most important action in the Draft. This action has now been rendered meaningless by you.

Given that our organisation is one of the contributors of the Recovery Plan and mentioned as such in the Plan, we would like a public announcement by you that we are not a party to the changes of wording on stream buffers , and that these recommendations are purely your's and Forestry Tasmania's and do not reflect the decision made by any of the rest of the Recovery Team. We feel the good name of our organisation is at stake, and if you cannot take proper measures that satisfy us to correct this, then we will be forced to take whatever action necessary to do so.

Jim Nelson, Public Officer, CNFN Inc.
cc. Hon. David Llewellyn, MHA, Minister DPIWE

(Editor's note)

The RFA process clearly indicated that protection of this priority species in production forest would be by management prescription—no reserves were set aside. Forestry interests have successfully delayed the Recovery Plan for years by using its subservient agencies, the IFC and the P&WS. The evil empire rolls on with no one but little community groups in its way. TheTeam members representing the agencies are silent in shameful complicity. *Jim Nelson*

NO MORE FREE TRANSFUSIONS

You came silently, dot-and-carry-one,
Intent in your blood-lust
On my left buttock
They say you have a mouth at both ends;
Whatever, you progressed, so silently,
By mini-bites of me.
Computing your way along promontories of shin and thigh
To scissor and suck, suck and scissor
Me.
Satisfied, you'll drop, a blood-bag with a head.
Live well on my wine-dark life-fluid, while you can..
Next time, if there is a next time, you bastard,
I'll crush you, and my blood, under my foot!

Peter Bamford