



BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SA INC.

NEWSLETTER

No. 42: August 2011

‘NATIVE GRASSES - AN OVERVIEW’ July Public Talks Program

An enthusiastic audience were enthralled by the presentation on “Native Grasses – An Overview” given by Bob Myers, BCSA member and Life Member of the Native Grass Resources Group Incorporated, at the general meeting on Tuesday 5th July.

Bob covered the importance and origins of Grasses. He explained how South Australia through its “systematic colonisation” model, was settled in 1836 as a British Province and had to quickly be self-supporting. In less that 30 years after the first settlers arrived in SA there were 3 million sheep grazing the native grasslands and woodlands. It wasn’t long before degradation was evident.

We saw through the maps provided that, even in the 76% of the State that is Arid Rangelands, 20% is native grass dominant. The zone of Temperate Grasslands (including woodlands and open scrub) covered much of the rest of the State. Despite the obvious degradation of the grassy ecosystems, the first serious mapping of them did not occur until the 1990s.

Bob, using his display of potted native grasses, explained how the indigenous nations developed a seed-grinding culture over 6000 years. He has been involved recently with research into the human nutritional analyses of over 25 native grass species seed.

Bob is passionate about native grasses and works with them on a daily basis. As Climate Change is on everyone’s lips he discussed the unique growth characteristics of some of the 72 genera and 269 species of SA native grasses. He noted that 7 genera are definitively associated with 6 species of butterflies.

Of particular interest to the audience was the fact that the C4 summer active grasses, which grow best in hot-moist and hot-dry conditions convert all the CO₂ absorbed into plant growth material. This was compared with the C3 grasses which release up to 40% of the absorbed carbon when stressed by hot dry conditions.



Bob discussed several species of native grasses and their relationship with butterfly caterpillars and the life cycle table which would influence the management of grasses. Perennial native grasses need to be grazed for vitality and longevity and timing is very important if you are managing for other species as well.

Bob concluded his well received talk with an impassioned plea for us to have a reality check about ways of locking up CO₂ and the need for us to revisit the basic principles of the Web of Life.

Gerry Butler, 12th July, 2011

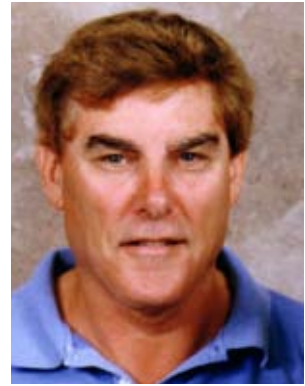
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BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SA. INC. for membership enquiries and annual membership payments (\$10):
Treasurer: 5 Oakleigh Road, MARION. 5043 S.AUST.

BCSA Chairman's Report: AGM 2 August 2011 – David Keane

Another year flutters by with an ever enthusiastic committee and new members and ideas. Special thanks as always to Jan Forrest for her wonderful running of the group and putting together top quality newsletters. Thanks go to the committee with a fresh input from Gerry Butler, Leon Giblin (an IT volunteer) for keeping our website up to date and professional, and to the SA Museum for their valued support. My personal thanks go to all that support the conservation of butterflies and their habitats. A personal thank you goes to my partner Beth for standing in as secretary at the last AGM and continued support for BCSA.



Over the past year our activities have included:

- A highlight of the year saw the discovery or rediscovery by member Janet Subagio of the 'chequered copper' (*Lucia limbaria*) or 'Adelaide's copper' butterfly happily living in the Adelaide parklands. This species has a symbiotic relationship with certain ants, so our urban parks do have corners of unknown biodiversity occurring, we just need to look harder. In places many indigenous plants still exist. Thanks to all those involved in assessing and preserving them along with the Adelaide City Council.
- The interest in the public for butterfly gardens is on the increase with over 50 registered sites maintained by schools and individuals. These activities promote sustainable landscapes and education about reduction in the use of harmful products in the garden and the environment. Many members and public are sending in photos and articles about their gardens and what they have achieved, it's quite remarkable what changes are being made.
- This year saw the introduction of the 'Public Talks Program' which is having enormous success and attendance. The variety of natural topics and quality of speakers is astonishing. The program of speakers is near full for 2012.
- The interests in moths, the 'closet Lepidoptera' are making an appearance as more people are sending in photographs and wanting more information, not only about the moth but what they feed on and what the caterpillars look like.
- We are working on educational materials/publications for Adelaide's moths, such as moth posters and articles in our newsletter. I should mention that Peter Marriot's 'Moths of Victoria' is a stunning series and includes most of the moths which can be found in South Australia.
- The newsletter included an 'indigenous food plant list' for butterflies which will be helpful in creating habitat. The same is planned for moths, which will be a wider and varied list, including lichens, spider webs and many weeds.
- Expos and displays continue to keep the message out there. Thanks to all those involved.

Groups such as ours would not function as effectively without the support and funding by Government agencies and organisations. Nearly 2,500 of our books have been sold since 2007 (only 500 left). A reprint is envisaged for 2012 -13. Thanks again to Jan and the committee for all the work in keeping BCSA in the limelight.

David Keane
Chairman
Butterfly Conservation SA Inc.

2010-2011 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Due to the Treasurer being overseas the books were unable to be audited in time for the AGM. A summary of the accounts was presented to members on 2nd August AGM and the audited statements of accounts will be published in the next newsletter.

AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY SPRING FLOWER SHOW AND PLANT SALE

will be held at Wayville Showgrounds on
Saturday October 8th and Sunday October 9th. Sat
10.00am - 5.00pm
Sun. 10.00am - 4.00pm
IF YOU CAN HELP OUT ON THE BCSA STAND
PLEASE CONTACT JAN FORREST
08 82978230 or forrestjan@adam.com.au

We were delighted to receive this letter late last year from Karen Palmer a parent, on behalf of the Governing Council of the **Eden Hills Kindergarten**, telling us about their **butterfly garden**. Karen's letter and photos are reprinted here as we are sure they will be of interest to all members.

Dear Secretary,

We received our official Butterfly Site from you with great excitement, and thought we would share some photos from our butterfly garden working bee day. As part of our plan to enhance the outdoor learning environment at Eden Hills Kindergarten, the Butterfly Garden was added to compliment our many local native plants planted in 2009 as part of the Million Trees Program, and the native vegetation we share right up to the fence in the Mitcham Hills Reserve.

The garden used an existing sleeper structure which was converted into a raised garden bed, and recycled tyres to create a stepped garden, forming the head and neck of a snake, which is connected to paths which wind around the sand pit and via a winding boardwalk through native trees and past our vegie garden, which depict the body of a snake, as a reference to the connection of the indigenous Kaurna People to the land. The existing garden also has fruit trees, a number of mature Grey Box eucalypts, and a new sensory garden full of plants with different smells, colours, textures and tastes. The parents on the Governing Council discovered the book "Attracting Butterflies to your Garden: What to Grow and Conserve in the Adelaide Region", and the resources on the butterfly gardening and Mitcham Council websites and decided to make a feature of a new Butterfly Garden. Through our connection with the SA Biodiversity Unit we were able to purchase the remaining 160 plants from Mitcham Council's Grey Box Day, all of which have value for Butterflies and Caterpillars. They include many grasses, saltbushes, acacias and eucalypts. The Kindy children visited the Wittunga Botanic Garden to see the Butterfly Garden there, and have been learning about native plants and Butterflies.

The garden came together with the help of the Kindergarten community, including Mums, Dads, grandparents, and staff, and of course, many enthusiastic little helpers!

Since completion the garden has attracted a lot of children, especially a number of our special needs children who enjoy the combination of sensory stimulation in the crunchy pebble path and the connection with nature. All of the children have been remarkable careful with our baby plants, and we look forward to seeing them grow, and attracting lots of butterflies! A nurturing garden for all growing things!

Since then, we held the launch of our new recycling depot, which was opened by the hon. SA Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development Jay Weatherill, who toured the new Butterfly Garden. Our Butterfly Site sign was proudly displayed on the fence at the front entrance.

On Behalf of the Governing Council of Eden Hills Kindergarten,

Yours Sincerely,
Karen Palmer
Parent



Top: watching the delivery of mulch for the new Butterfly Garden.
Next: getting to work!
Finally: exploring the pebble trail in the finished Butterfly Garden.

BCSA POLO SHIRT ORDERS

Due to an error in sizing there are still two 62cm (extra large) shirts in Mid Jade and Gold, available for immediate collection see below. If you would like to purchase one of these at the discounted price of \$25ea (plus postage) please contact Secretary Jan Forrest forrestjan@adam.com.au or telephone 82978230 to make arrangements.



PUBLIC TALKS PROGRAM 2011

On the first Tuesday of the month March to November at 6.15pm for a prompt 6.30pm start.

At the Clarence Park Community Centre
72-74 East Avenue, Black Forest.

Bus route W91/W90: stop 10.

Noarlunga Train service: Clarence Park Station

Glenelg Tram: Forestville stop 4, 9min walk south.

Entry by donation (minimum of \$2).

Please bring supper to share, tea/coffee will be supplied.

Meetings should conclude by 8.30pm.

At the start of each meeting (other than in Aug) a ten minute presentation on a 'Butterfly of the Month' will be given by a BCSA committee member.

6th Sept: "The paradox of the possum: possums in our lives in SA" Philip Roetman from the University of South Australia has researched how people interact with our native possums. An entertaining talk on the pros and cons of living with possums, and why our space is important habitat for this local wildlife.

4th Oct: "Life on salt lakes" South Australia has many salt lakes and Museum Collection Manager Dr. Peter Hudson prowls every lake he encounters looking for the signs of the animals that live on and below the surface of the lake.

1st Nov "Vertical Wall and Rooftop Gardening at the Adelaide Zoo" Horticulturists Jeff Lugg and Danielle Shallow are involved in the planning, design, construction, installation and maintenance of a special garden at the zoo - this fascinating talk will be of interest to all gardeners.

In this case of an advertised speaker not being available, a speaker of similar interest will replace that advertised.

EXCURSION

Where? To a site near Purnong on the River Murray where the White-veined Skipper *Herimosa albovenata* is known to fly in mid September and other known butterfly sites.

Excursion leader Mike Moore.

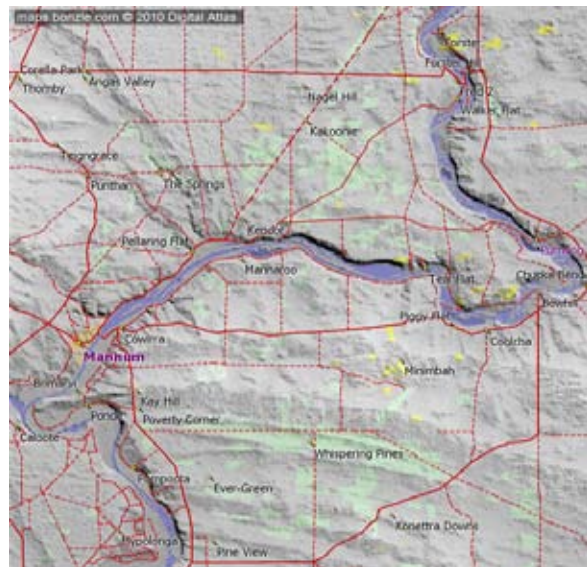
When? On Saturday 24th September, 2011.

Meet Walkers Flat Ferry at 10.00am

Bring lunch, reference material (plant, bird etc.).

If you intend to come on this trip please confirm your attendance with Mike Moore ph: 82773599 or email: mima@tpg.net.au and provide a contact number if we need to contact you for any changes in arrangements.

Some transport will be available - if you would like transport contact Mike as soon as possible.



Public talks program 2012
If you know of a good speaker please contact Secretary Jan Forrest with their contact details.

PROPOSED EXCURSION TO KANGARILLA in November 2011

Earlier this year Secretary Jan Forrest received an email from a member with information on an interesting property near Kangarilla and a list of plants to be found there. At the last committee meeting we thought this would be a great place to visit. However the paperwork has been mislaid and Jan cannot locate the email!

If you were the member who sent this information please contact Jan again as we would love to visit the property and make this an excursion for all interested members.

INTERESTING WEBSITES

Danimations: BCSA members Dan Monceaux and Emma Sterling have set up a video business and their website includes some stunning images of butterflies and other animals. Go to <http://www.danimations.com.au> and to the 'on-line store' to see some of their images.

Moths of an Adelaide Hills Garden: Brian Cartwright is a keen photographer and his website features a stunning array of moth images photographed at his home in Stirling. Go to: <http://www.pbase.com/merlotadl/moths>.

Friends of Parks E-News:

<http://www.communitywebs.org/FriendsofParks/>






IDENTIFYING MOTH FAMILIES – Part 1 by D. Keane

Just like plant families the amateur uses observation and field experience to pick up certain tricks rather than by scientific keys to identify species, which can be extremely difficult. Using scientific keys requires a good knowledge of the Latinized language whilst the short cuts are acquired by recognising certain features/shapes and are the real key to success such as identifying from pictures! Due to the vast number of moth species, over 2,000 in South Australia, moth families are divided into subfamilies for identification. Moths in Australia do not have well known common names unlike Great Britain where nearly all species have been recorded and are named. “Moths, butterflies, and some other insects can often be readily identified as to genus and sometimes as to species, by differences in their eggs” Ref: Moths Eggs article by Noel McFarland. There are about 85 families of moths in Australia and recognising a few will go a long way of being able to identify the common ones. Remembering that identifiable features do not always run true, it’s the way of any living thing, there are always exceptions.

Book references as follows:

- Common Moths of the Adelaide Region – P. B. McQuillan and J. A. Forrest
- Portraits of South Australian Geometrid Moths by Noel McFarland 1988 (Rare) try the Library
- Moths of Victoria (present series 1, 2 and 3) by Peter Marriott – 2009. One of the best for our local moths
- A Guide to Australian Moths by Paul Zborowski and Ted Edwards - CSIRO 2007 Great pictures!
- Moths of Australia by I.F.B. Common – 1990>
- Moths of Australia – Bernard D’Abrebra 1974 (rare)

The vast majority of Australian moths can be found in Oecophoridae or Tortricidae (micro moths) and Pyralidae, Geometridae, and Noctuidae (larger moths). Here is a selection.

Family	Common Names	Adults	Caterpillar	Adelaide Example
SPHINGIDAE (60 species in Australia) 1200 world wide “Hawk moths”	Death’s Head Convolvulus hawk Vine hawk moth Coprosma hawk	Large bodies and streamlined in design with rapid flight speed	Smooth with a stiff or spine at the rear. Usually brown or green. eg. <i>Hippotion scrofa</i>	
GEOMETRIDAE (1300 species in Australia) 21,000 world wide “Geometrid moths”	Peppered moth Emeralds Hakea moth Twig looper	Lightly built, slender bodies with ample wing space. Can be well camouflaged	Loop when in motion. Some resemble twigs. eg. <i>Oenochroma vinaria</i>	
NOTODONTIDAE (90 species in Australia) 2800 world wide “Notodontid moths”	Prominents Puss moth Lobster moth Kitten moths Snub moths	Medium to large hairy moths. Wings folded along the body	Oddly shaped larvae. Some processionary caterpillars. eg. <i>Oenosandra boisduvalii</i>	
LASIOCAMPIDAE (70 species in Australia) 1500 world wide “Snout moths”	Lappet, Drinker and Oak Egger moths	Mostly big moths where females are larger than males. Some have palps that protrude	Hairy and spin a strong silken cocoon. eg. <i>Entometa fervens</i>	
LYMANTRIDAE (70 species in Australia) 2500 world wide “Tussock moths”	Gypsy moth Black Arches moth Vapourer moth	Hairy moths with large furry bodies	Often ornamental with tufts which can irritate the skin eg. <i>Acyphas leucomelas</i>	

No.1 - QUIZ FOR LEPODOPTERANS – D. Keane

1. Translated by the Aborigines as 'Big Fella' which creature, in their millions, invaded the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games?
2. What family of irritating plants is exclusively used as the food plant of the Australian Admiral butterfly?
3. What communication and balancing devices are similar to butterflies in the 'sun moths' or Castniids?
4. Apart from the chequered copper, what two other South Australian butterflies have a 'chequered career'?
5. What butterfly is pictured on the book 'Butterflies of South Australia' by Robert H. Fisher, 1978?
6. Which genus of cabbage butterflies has the same name as the genus of ornamental plants, formerly known as *Andromeda* in the Ericaceae family?
7. What distinction does the 'Lithochroa Blue' butterfly hold in South Australia?
8. What four lettered word which is Greek for 'willow' is a species of the *Vanessa* butterfly, the leaves of the Flinders Range wattle and the genus of Sweetspire?
9. What is the 'astronomical' name given to the development stages in which a caterpillar moults or sheds its skin?
10. What insects are symbiotically associated with the rearing of some 'blue butterfly' caterpillars?

Answers:

(1) Bogong moth, (2) Nettle family (Urticaceae), (3) Antennae (being clubbed), (4) The 'chequered swallowtail' and the 'chequered blue', (5) The wood white (*Delias aganippe*), (6) *Pieris*, (7) It's the only endemic butterfly from South Australia, (8) *Itea*, (9) Instars, (10) Ants.

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SA Inc.

Chairman: David Keane

Secretary and Newsletter Editor: Jan Forrest OAM C/- South Australian Museum, North Terrace, ADELAIDE, 5000 ph H (08) 8297 8230.

email <jan.forrest@samuseum.sa.gov.au> or <forrestjan@adam.com.au>

Treasurer : 5 Oakleigh Road, MARION. 5043 S.AUST.

OUTREACH PROGRAM

The full exhibition and AO size panels from the Exhibition "Where have all the Butterflies gone?" are available from Jan Forrest at the South Australian Museum for use by Landcare and other Conservation groups at seminars, conferences and workshops or just for display. Included are five introductory panels, and seventeen panels from seven habitat areas: Coastal, Grasses, Mallee, Urban, Migration/Vagrant, Eucalyptus Forrest/Woodland, Arid, Wetland and Lower South East.

DIARY DATES

COMMITTEE MEETINGS - Meetings are normally held bi-monthly (usually the second Monday of the month) at 6.00pm at a committee members home. All members are welcome to attend. If you would like to attend please contact Secretary Jan Forrest.

Next Committee Meeting: 12th September, venue to be advised, 6.30pm

PUBLIC TALKS PROGRAM: first Tuesday March - Nov., Clarence Park Community Centre 6.15pm for a 6.30pm start to 8.30pm.

Next talk: 6th Sept: "The paradox of the possum: possums in our lives in SA" by Philip Roetman from the University of South Australia.

WEB SITES

"Butterfly Gardening" - www.butterflygardening.net.au

'Butterfly Conservation SA Inc.' <http://www.chariot.net.au/~bcsa/index.htm>

'South Australian Butterflies' (Roger Grund private site)

- <http://www.sabutterflies.org.au> ([change of url](#))

'Butterfly Watch' and 'Butterfly Challenge' - SAMuseum website

www.samuseum.sa.gov.au then click on 'Whats On' then 'online exhibitions'.

Teacher Resources (Jackie Miers) - http://www.teachers.ash.org.au/jmresources/butadelaide/Butterflies_of_Adelaide.html

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Laura Mewett
Janet Willoughby
Margaret Maschmedt
Geraldine Davis
Bernie Haase
Foundation for Aust. Most
Endangered Species Inc.
Angela Vaughan
Matthew Wright-Simon
Ann Chatfield
Marie Nerris
William Bentley
Mark Pharaoh and Jill
Woodlands

