



BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SA INC.

NEWSLETTER

No. 46: November, 2012

COMMON MOTHS OF THE ADELAIDE REGION POSTER LAUNCH 6th October at the APS plant sale Wayville.

We were delighted to have Dr. Peter McQuillan launch our two moth posters: *“Common Moths of the Adelaide Region“*.

Here is a copy of his opening remarks.

It is great to be in Adelaide, and many thanks to the Gerry and his team for making it possible to be here in the spring moth season. As a youngster observing moths around Adelaide from the late 1960s I quickly ran into the problem of trying to name these wonderful creatures. There were no Australian printed guides to the fauna in those days, but through the kindness of curators such as Noel McFarland, Gordon Gross, Eric Matthews and Jan Forrest I was welcome to peruse the unparalleled reference collections at the SA Museum. Now that I could name my collection I was launched on a career in which moths and their ways continue to feature strongly.

Why should we know more about moths?

Well, there is a lot of them, perhaps 25,000 species continent-wide and second only to beetles in their diversity. For every Australian species of bird or butterfly, there are more than 25 species of moths. However, only about half are formally named, a situation prevailing in the 1840s for the moth fauna of western Europe by comparison. But on a positive note, Australian moths represent an exciting frontier in natural science and promise many novel discoveries in the years ahead. Ecologists would point to their important role in food webs, as herbivores on plants, pollinators of flowers and as food for predatory spiders, birds and lizards. Their diversity and abundance makes them potentially useful to land managers as indicators of habitat quality. But perhaps their most appealing feature to humans is their pleasing beauty in form and colour. For this we must be thankful that birds have acute colour vision and have driven an evolutionary arms race on the back of their lethal efficiency as visual hunters of insects. So effective is bird foraging that, millions of years ago, it probably drove moths to the safer nocturnal domain (...and thus to the advantage of bats).

But these features are not obvious to everyone, so we need to improve the public relations of moths. The popular notion of them as competitors for human food and fibre is misleading. Only a fraction of one percent, less than 40 native species, are pests of Australian agriculture. Nor are they generally dull – most are attractively patterned in multi-coloured scales, some strikingly so.

What is special about South Australia’s moths?

With its varied geography and large extent, our state enjoys a considerable share of the rich Australian moth fauna. Here, a few groups of special interest stand out. A variety of primitive types including large hepialids and small lophocoronids, whose origins predate Gondwana, preserve evidence of the deep history of Lepidoptera. Similarly, the

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Top: Peter McQuillan with Gerry Butler
Middle: with photographers Gerhard Weber and Brian Cartwright
Bottom: with Jill Davy and Gerry Butler

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

close associations we see between certain plants and the moths which depend on them hint at millions of years of co-evolution. The beautiful mallee moths, comprising the large family Oecophoridae, are well represented in our dry woodlands and heathlands where they rival wildflowers in their variety.

Among our most attractive species is the hepialid *Aenetus blackburni*, named after its collector Thomas Blackburn who was the first Anglican priest at Port Lincoln. As a memento of a presentation she gave in Hobart, I was recently able to present a photograph of this beautiful moth to his great grand daughter Elizabeth who won the Nobel Prize for medicine in 2009.

Unfortunately, in most countries, the moth fauna is declining from the onslaught of economic development and over consumption. The historical collection of the SA Museum shows that the Adelaide Plains once hosted a richer moth fauna, but arresting this decline is a significant challenge. It is sobering to remember that Oswald Lower's beautiful geometrid *Notiosterrha rhodocosma*, once common on the coast, has not been seen for a century; and that the colourful *Gastrophora henricaria* first found by the local school teacher at Balhannah in the 1880s has retreated to a single locality.

How can we promote the conservation of moths?

Firstly, under biodiversity legislation, governments have the responsibility to conserve all native fauna – moths included. While most bureaucracies remain poorly equipped to deliver on this obligation, this is slowly changing but persistent advocacy is important in driving the outcomes we need.

Secondly, we must raise awareness that even modest remnants of vegetation – too small to be of value to mammal or bird populations - can still make a worthwhile contribution to conserving moth populations.

Thirdly, establish more native plants of local provenance. These are best because native moths can be fussy regarding the chemistry of their hostplants. Acacias and eucalypts native to other states can remain remarkably free of insects when planted outside their natural range – hardly conducive to a healthy garden ecosystem. And avoid the use of pesticides on shrubs and trees.

Fourthly, encourage the build up of leaf litter in gardens and reserves. Dead leaves and stems are an important food source for caterpillars and many species pupate in the litter layer. A variety of litter is best – moist and dry, deep and shallow, some layered and some elevated. Many moths are coloured to resemble bark and decaying wood and will feel more at home if they can find these substrates to rest upon. Wooden paling fences are friendlier

to moths rather than metal ones.

And importantly, minimise light pollution. Unnecessary lighting at night serves to disrupt moth behaviour and concentrates moths to the advantage of hungry birds in the morning. The proliferation of solar powered garden lights are not moth friendly.

But our most pressing obligation of course is to promote knowledge about moths to a new generation of conservation-minded citizens. For it is indeed true that we only care for what we know about. What a wonderful resource these posters would have been to me in my youth. These posters will be a major legacy of the good work being done by BCSA and much credit is due to Gerry and his committee, the photographers, the staff at Ariel Printing and to the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Natural Resources Management Board through Jill Davy who provided the funding.

It is with pleasure that I launch the Butterfly Conservation SA moth posters and I thoroughly recommend them to the public.



HOW TO OBTAIN THE TWO POSTERS "MOTHS OF THE ADELAIDE REGION"

The two posters are being made available to schools free of charge as part of our funding agreement with the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Natural Resources Management Board. However schools must pay for postage.

If you are associated with a school please request a 'school order form'. Cost of postage is \$10 and must accompany the form.

BCSA Members and the general public may purchase a set of two posters for \$10 plus postage = \$20.

A member/general public form is enclosed with this newsletter. On receipt of your form/money the posters will be posted out to you.

Posters will be available to purchase at the Public Talks Program and at 30 Churchill Avenue, Clarence Park, (call Jan on 82978230 to arrange collection) also at the Mt. Pleasant Natural Resource Centre, 132 Melrose Street, Mt Pleasant (phone Gerry on 08 85681876 to arrange collection).

MELDANDA BUTTERFLY GARDEN

Aimee Linke, Mid Muray Local Action Planning Committee Inc.

Situated on the banks of the majestic Marne River at Meldanda, the Butterfly Garden is being created to attract our local regional butterflies by planting nectar plants for the butterflies and food plants for their caterpillars. There are many plants that our local butterflies have a specific association with like the Chequered Copper, *Lucia limbaria* to the Native Sorrell, *Oxalis perennans*, often confused with weeds like soursobs, the butterflies and caterpillars both use this plant.



a host plant to the caterpillar of the Wanderer, *Danaus plexippus plexippus* an immigrant from North America.

The Cambrai Area School has also been involved with the butterfly garden and has created some beautiful butterfly mosaics that have gracefully landed on some of the dead trees and branches in the garden.

Meldanda has a friends group that meets the first Friday of every month to work on the property, this year we will be weeding, mulching and adding new plants to the collection. Once the butterfly garden is closer to completion we will include some interpretive signs to identify plants and the species of butterfly they attract or caterpillars they feed. The interpretive signs will make it a great educational resource for schools or community to visit.

This is a lovely space to come and enjoy a walk, see butterflies and flowering plants and we look forward to watching it develop in the coming years and hopefully successfully attracting butterflies to breed in our garden.

We have discovered it is vital to have plants that are specific food for caterpillars, many butterflies can be attracted to the nectar of many flowering plants but the caterpillar requires specific food plants. Some plants have been difficult to source like the Native Stinging Nettle, *Urtica incisa*, the food plant for the beautiful Australian Admiral, *Vanessa itea*, once the eggs are laid and the baby caterpillar's hatch they are attended to by ants. There is a unique symbiosis that occurs with so many plants and animals which is why we need to be so conscious of what we poison.

There are some plants that we will not include in the gardens even if they are specific to certain butterflies as we are aware of weeds that threaten our native environment and could be easily spread along the waterway where the garden is situated. One such plant is the Broad-leaf Cotton Bush, *Gomphocarpus cancellatus*, originally introduced from South Africa it is a weedy species and



Friends of Meldanda



Top left: The butterfly Garden
Above and left: Cambrai Area School mosaics

PUBLIC TALKS PROGRAM

Will continue during 2013 on the first Tuesday of the month March to November at 6.15pm for a prompt 6.30pm start.

The program of speakers are presently being arranged and if you can provide the contact details of suitable speakers please contact Secretary Jan Forrest 82978230

Venue: 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).

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.

REPRINT OF OUR BOOK Attracting butterflies to your garden, what to grow and conserve in the Adelaide Region.

In 2007 we printed 3000 copies of our book and with just under 400 copies remaining the committee are considering reprinting options.

Fortunately we have sufficient funds available to reprint the book in its present format with a few alterations however if a full scale re-write is envisaged or additional species added that will, of course, incur more expense and additional funding would be needed.

Members are asked to provide comments on the present book. Have you found any errors? Would you like any images replaced, text re-written, species or other information added? NOW is your opportunity.

Please respond in writing/email to secretary Jan Forrest and include your contact details if we need to get back to you for clarification.

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Do you have a collection? Is it being cared for? What will happen to it when you cannot look after it?

Many significant insect collections are housed in private collections. Whilst the private collector is actively looking after it, it is safe, however there are some very sad tales to tell when the collection languishes in the back room, the shed or attic once the collector is unable to look after it.

Collections can include specimens, books, photographic transparencies, prints and negatives. These are all valuable especially when the material has been accumulated over many years and depicts material that due to land clearance and urbanisation, can no longer be found in these locations.

The Collection Manager at the South Australian Museum is often asked if the Museum is interested in receiving a collection which belonged previously to a relative. Sometimes these collections have been stored for many years without being looked at, with tragic results.

CARING FOR YOUR COLLECTION

The best way of ensuring your collection remains safe is to store it in sealed cabinets as the biggest threat to collections of organic matter is from the larvae of the *Anthrenus* beetle (often called the Museum beetle).

Damage can be extreme as the images on page 5 show. This can happen in a few weeks or for smaller specimens, in just a few days a specimen can be ruined.

Collections need **regular close inspection**. At the first sign of larval frass the whole drawer should be frozen for a minimum of ten days in a chest freezer. Wrap the drawer in a towel then seal it in a plastic bag. Do not open the freezer at any time during the ten days. When taken out of the freezer, leave the drawer wrapped in the towel for several hours at room temperature to minimize condensation.

Naphthalene is now banned in many countries. Camphor can still be purchased to be used as a deterrent however its value is questionable.

To be useful as a research collection all specimens **MUST BE labelled** with the locality and preferably the date, collectors name and further biological information such as habitat and host plant.

Specimens with no locality label have no scientific value.

Continued next page

SUCCESSION PLANNING

BUTTERFLY and INSECT COLLECTIONS

When you are no longer able to look after your collection, and your relatives do not have an interest please consider depositing it in the South Australian Museum for future generations of researchers.

Material deposited in the South Australian Museum is protected from insect damage with annual inspections and maintenance by staff from Art Lab. 24 hour fire protection is maintained at the highest level including direct access to the fire brigade.

Specimens lodged in the South Australian Museum continue to be accessible to researchers from all over the world who visit or request the loan of specimens. Thus all your work in collecting, pinning and labelling the specimens will not be lost but continue to add knowledge of our insect fauna.

OPTIONS

- Donation under the Cultural Gifts Program and receive substantial tax concessions. Specimens must have appropriate locality data and concessions are increased if the material is identified. The collection must be listed and valued (at your expense) by two recognised valuers. Prior to arranging this, the Museum must agree to receive the material and donations under this scheme can only be made by the owner. See http://arts.gov.au/tax_incentives/cgp.
- Donate the material directly to the South Australian Museum. A formal donation can be made to the Board and a Deed of Donation Agreement will be signed between the donor and Museum Board. Or donate directly to the appropriate section through the Collection Manager who will complete an Entry Form.
- Deposit the material in the South Australian Museum. In this case a Deed of Deposit Agreement between donor and the Museum Board will be signed. You still own the material however it is stored at the Museum for safe keeping. Some conditions apply.

In all cases you have access to your collection for research purposes and the Museum will undertake to ensure each specimen has a label which indicates the material came from your collection (if there is not already a label saying this).

Selling is obviously another option. Unfortunately the South Australian Museum is rarely in a position to purchase specimens although if the collection is one of significant South Australian heritage value, funds may be made available from the Board. Although this is unlikely, please come to South Australian Museum first!

Interstate Museums may have more funds than the SAMuseum so it may be worthwhile approaching

them, however in this case the South Australian material is lost to South Australians.

OTHER COLLECTIONS

TRANSPARENCIES, PHOTOS, NEGATIVES, PHOTO CD/DVDs

Butterfly Conservation SA is particularly interested in receiving donations of transparencies and images of butterflies and moths. Previous donations to BCSA have been deposited in the South Australian Museum under a Deed of Deposit so are retained by Butterfly Conservation however are kept safe at the Museum.

Members of the BCSA and the Museum, have full access to the material for educational purposes, flyers and other publications. The images are also made available for education and other non-commercial purposes such as interpretive signs and flyers.

BOOKS

Books probably have the best resale value should you/your relatives wish to benefit financially from your collection. Butterfly Conservation has a small library which can be made available to members on loan should you wish to donate your books to BCSA. The South Australian Museum may be interested in obscure journals and books of historical value. Please contact the librarian.

MANUSCRIPTS AND COLLECTING NOTES including website notes and images.

These are an extremely valuable resource and should be lodged with the SAMuseum or with someone who will benefit from all your hard work over many years. It may be possible that your manuscript/s can be published after your death if all the text, plates, images etc. are all together.

LET YOUR RELATIVES KNOW YOUR WISHES

The Butterfly Conservation committee are keen to ensure all butterfly (and other collections) are kept safe. Please think about what you would like to happen to your collection and talk to your relatives about this. You may like to fill out the form provided on page 6 and leave it with your personal papers. If you would like to tell us about your collection you may like to send us a copy for confidential safe keeping.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Talk to the Entomology Collection Manager SAMuseum or Secretary of BCSA Jan Forrest.

Continued on Page 6



COLLECTION DETAILS

YOUR NAME

YOUR ADDRESS

MY COLLECTION COMPRISES: attach sheet if insufficient space

.....

.....

THE COLLECTION IS LOCATED:

.....

NAME OF RESPONSIBLE RELATIVE/FRIEND:

CONTACT DETAILS ADDRESS:

.....

PHONE: MOBILE:

EMAIL:

**INSTRUCTIONS to THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR MY AFFAIRS.
(attach sheet if insufficient space)**

Collection

.....

.....

.....

Images/photos

.....

.....

Books/papers

.....

.....

Other

.....

Signed: Date:

Your Name:

Witnessed: Date:

Name of witness:

A copy of this form has/has not been lodged with the secretary of Butterfly Conservation SA Inc.

BCSA Chairman’s Report: AGM 7th August 2012 – David Keane



The year was another with enthusiastic running by Jan Forrest and the committee. Special thanks to Gerry Butler for his wonderful work on the moth poster and for being involved with other issues. Thanks also go to the SA Museum for their support, and to Jan for the newsletters. We continue to attract new members as we broaden education to the public. My personal thanks go to the committee for all their support during the year, and other volunteers for all their assistance.

Over the past year our major activities have included:
 Finalising moth posters. Thanks to Brian Cartwright for his photos from the Adelaide Hills. Special visit by moth expert Peter McQuillan. Thanks also to Roger Grund and Mike Moore for their contributions for technical data.
 The very successful Talks program. Thanks to all our organisers and interesting speakers.
 We have continued with presentations to groups, sales of our book and adding further butterfly gardening sites.

The major newsletter articles included:

- The trip to Purnong to find skippers and other caterpillars, great day out.
- Information about the Talks Program – many attendees
- Article in the UK Butterfly Conservation magazine about BCSA – origins in Kent
- BCSA butterfly fact sheets
- NRM education information sheets ‘Butterflies of the Adelaide Region’

In the following 12 months we plan to:

- Launch the moth posters at the Australian Plant Society plant sales at Wayville in October.
- Broaden the understanding of Lepidoptera including information on moths and other Australian butterflies.
- Continue with the high standard of presentation of our newsletter, Talks program and presentations to community groups.
- Completion of the butterfly fact sheets

Thanks again to the committee and members for their support and contributions to another successful year! Thanks to my partner, Beth for helping me through the years and standing in for Jan as secretary.

David Keane
 Chairman
 Butterfly Conservation SA Inc.

BCSA Treasurer’s Report Financial Year

EVERYDAY ACCOUNT

Income (including Opening Balance)	11334.07
Opening Balance	1525.77
Subtotal	9808.30
Expenses	3493.85
Subtotal	6314.45
Transfers	7000.00
Balance -	685.55
2011/12 Closing balance	840.22
Carried over Cash from 2010/11	5.50
Final balance	\$845.52
Account Balance as per CPS	\$845.52

MONEYSAVER ACCOUNT

Opening Balance	23896.46
Interest	1373.20
Transfers	7000.00
Subtotal	32369.83
Closing balance	32369.83
Account Balance as per CPS	32369.83

Found to be a true summary of the transactions for the period 1/07/2011 to 30/06/2012 and that the closing balances are reconciled with the balance of the Bank Statement.
 Signed K.Foggo AASA, FCIS
 Auditor

KANGARILLA EXCURSION

Thanks to Lynne Fitzsimmons for hosting our group to a morning of flowers and friendship at her property near Kangarilla on 22nd September (few butterflies thou!).



DISPLAY AT THE AUSTRALIAN PLANTS SOCIETY SALE at WAYVILLE

Sincere thanks to members who ‘manned’ the BCSA stand at the APS show, without your help we would not be able to continue to promote the work of butterfly conservation.

GIFT IDEAS

Flowers of Para Wirra Greeting Cards \$2 ea or a pack of 6 for \$10. Flowers of Para Wirra book \$15. Contact 8280 7279 to arrange postage.

TREES FOR LIFE

Volunteer tree growers needed. Phone 8406 0500 if you can help.

AGM LOST PROPERTY

A large white tupperware container and knife were left after the AGM. If it is yours please contact Secretary Jan Forrest.

PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM

Thanks to a grant from the Adelaide Mt. Lofty Natural Resources Management Board we now have a public address system including a remote microphone. To be used mainly for the Public Talks Program the unit is available to members for presentations. Please contact Secretary Jan Forrest.



Member Bill Rowlands ‘mans’ our stall at the Wayville APS show.

NEWSLETTER IN COLOUR

In order to keep the membership fees low newsletters posted to members are printed in BLACK.

Electronic copies of the newsletter however are in colour.

If you presently receive a posted copy it means we do not have your up-to-date email address. Please provide your email address to Secretary Jan Forrest to receive your newsletter electronically.

BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION SA Inc.

Chairman: David Keane dkeane@iweb.net.au
 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 <jan_forrest@bigpond.com>
 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.

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.

PUBLIC TALKS PROGRAM 2013: first Tuesday March - Nov., Clarence Park Community Centre 6.15pm for a 6.30pm start to 8.30pm.

Next talk: 5th March: speaker to be advised

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>
 ‘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:

- Delrae Wapper
- Bev Schultz
- Ashley Borgeest
- Charles Lawson
- Carole Rundle
- Peri Coleman (site)
- Marion Cox
- Sue Maywald

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL from the committee of BCSA and all the very best wishes for a HAPPY NEW YEAR

