BAT FOREST SOCIETY
WSLETTER, May 2000

p.o.box 428, daylesford, 3460
ph/fax: 5348-1748

Meeting Schedule — Evening meetings 7.30pm

Fri May 5-7	National Forest Summit Moruya, N.S.W
Tues May16	Powerhouse Vincent St Daylesford
Sun May 28	WVFPN Meeting, Camperdown
Tues May 30	Powerhouse Vincent St Daylesford
Wed June 14	Powerhouse Vincent St Daylesford (Field Guide)
Sun June 25	Wombat Forest Tour (Booking Required)
Tues June 27	Blackwood Community Hall, Blackwood
Tues July 4	Powerhouse Vincent St Daylesford
Tues July 18	Powerhouse Vincent St Daylesford
Tues Aug 1	Powerhouse Vincent St Daylesford
Tues Aug15	Powerhouse Vincent St Daylesford (AGM)
Tues Aug29	Powerhouse Vincent St Daylesford

WFS COMMITTEE
President - Tim Anderson 5348-1141
Treasurer - Peter O'Mara 5348-1154
Secretary - Madeleine Bodenham 5348-1516
Commitee Members - Loris Duclos 5156-0922
John Endacott 5345-7570
Henk Bak 5424-1702
Hugh Burnham 5348-3617

Your Membership Status

According to our records the following is our understanding of your membership. If your records indicate ortherwise, or your address label is incorrect, please let us know so that we can update our lists.

LAST PAID / /
(date)

NOW DUE

PAID UP UNTIL
/ / (date)

We are continually amazed and gratified by the generosity of members and supporters of WFS. If you have previously donated money in addition your membership fees, please accept our grateful thanks. We continue to rely on your support to maintain our campaign.

Membership renewal forms are located inside the back page of this newsletter.

PRINTED ON 100% POST CONSUMER RECYCLED PAPER - CYCLUS 80GSM

EDITORIAL

Welcome to our latest newsletter! In this newsletter we will attempt to provide some of our Regional Forest Agreement campaign to our members via part of our written submission to the RFA Independant Panel, local meeting information, campaign updates, newspaper articles and our ongoing participation in the Western Victorian Forest Protection Network. Also, we will be looking at the future directions of the Wombat Forest Society and the greater involvement of our core membership. The last two years has seen our campaign concentrate on the West Victorian Regional Forest Agreement with strong emphasis on sustainable yield and water values while maintaining our wholistic environmental approach. Our leadership role within the Western Victorian Forest Protection Network has been another significant, and somewhat time consuming, contribution to this campaign approach. The Wombat Forest is both everything and part of everything else. The challenge of the Wombat Forest Society is to find a balance of all of these considerations. A recent talk by local environmentalist, Barry Golding, (DNRE Forest Forum - Ballarat), highlighted the need for humankind to be considered, and consider ourselves, as an important component of the biodiversity equation. In other words, we are as much a living organism of the forest culture as the Powerful Owl or the rare Grevillea , not some inorganic sub-species. I had once written, that *the sum of all trees equalled God*, but obviously there is more than this although I still argue that it isn't a bad place to begin. So what does this all mean to our local Wombat Forest campaign?. My belief is that the Wombat Forest Society needs to challenge it's own methodology and reinvigorate it's local campaign with more forward thinking, pro-active community inclusive projects. Our last two years of campaigning has further established the integrity of the Wombat Forest Society but neglected stronger relationship with our membership base. We need to make adjustments. We must continue our own evolution. Finally, I would like to thank all those members who contributed to the West Victorian Regional Forest Agreement campaign, especially those who made submissions. A special mention also to our committee member families who have sacrificed much, personally & financially, to allow us all to traverse the countryside fighting for our local Wombat Forest & beyond. Well Done Everyone...

WOMBAT FOREST FIELD GUIDE

The Wombat Forest Society is calling for interested community members (and groups) to develop a comphrensive Field Guide for the local Wombat Forest. The Field Guide might include flora/fauna information, walking trials, aboriginal heritage, photographs, illustrations, conservation history, tree identification, etc.... Already, several people have indicated their interest in the the field guide and WFS committee members, Peter O'Mara and Hugh Burnham, have nominated as project managers. The Wombat Forest Society. Field Guide would provide a wonderful forest resource for both our local community and visitors to the Wombat Forest. A Field Guide meeting will be held on Wednesday 14th June at 7.30pm (Powerhouse). BYO Creative Spirit & Enthusiasm. Alcohol optional.
Any questions, ring Peter O'Mara...5348-1154

WOMBAT FOREST SOCIETY

RFA PRESS RELEASE

The Wombat Forest Society believe that the West Victorian Regional Forest Agreement has delivered both positive and negative outcomes for the Wombat Forest. The additional strategies complementary to the agreement are a definite bonus and vindication of the Wombat Forest Society's position of staying in the RFAs and using them as a means of exposing the disgraceful condition of the forests in the Midlands Forest Management Area. The WFS see the RFAs and the Brack's Government's announcement's of a number of studies and audit's into NRE as one of the most significant steps forward for our forests for over a decade. The WFS also have a number of concerns with regards to short-term timber volumes and woodchipping.

"The studies announced by the State Government over the next 12 to 36 months has the potential to see huge changes to the timber industry across the State. It is about time that a number of issues that have been 'festering' for years are faced up to." Said Wombat Forest Society spokesperson Tim Anderson. "These studies will include a review into clearfelling practices and woodchipping from our forests. As most people know, it is hard to see how non-timber values are preserved in a clearfell coupe."

Further studies will contain an independent review into the 'setting of sustainable yields and sawlog supplies.' The WFS believes that the announced reduction in the sustainable yield for the Midland's from the current 58 000 cubic meters of sawlog a year down to 40 000 m3 is only an interim step. WFS analysis on the recently announced NRE reworking of data, shows that the reduction has not factored in the over-harvesting of the Wombat. WFS modeling predicts that the sustainable yield for the Midlands should in fact be 25 000m3 p.a.

"The WFS believes that when the sustainable yield rate is properly assessed and set by the independent consultants in 2 years time, probably down to 25 000m3, that the local timber industry will be forced to question its own viability." Said Mr. Anderson " At the very least I believe that in around ten years time the industry will find its self in a position where the obvious lack of resource in the area will make it hard for contractors and sawmillers to justify updating their plant and machinery. The trees will not be there to give the returns to even pay off the new equipment."

"We welcome the initiatives to examine royalties and charges, log grading, the recovery of sawlogs from harvesting, harvesting arrangements and log allocation and the independent sustainability consultants. The WFS has long argued for many of these inquiries and believe that they will contribute towards securing a truly sustainable forest management system."

The WFS believes that the announced package should have contained a similar hydrological study for the Wombat to the one announced for the Otways. The Wombat supplies water to over one million Victorians and vital water to irrigators and other industries. The WFS will be lobbying for this much called for and absolutely vital study.

The contentious issue of woodchipping is still a concern. The announced reductions in sustainable yield and the growing recognition that this reduction is not enough, means that woodchipping levels will also need to be reduced. The WFS are concerned that the three years it will take for the sustainability review will give Midways the chance to further decimate and compromise the Midland's forests. The WFS is calling on an immediate reduction in woodchipping levels.

'The WFS is also questioning whether the delayed implementation of the sawlog reduction for at least two years is in the best interests of the forests, the community and the timber industry. If we even take 40 000m3 as what the figure should be, then to allow harvesting at 58 000 for two years will allow an extra 36 000 m3 of sawlogs to be cut. This is almost the equivalent of a full year's quota. In an area that is clearly in crisis, this extra over harvesting will only speed up the end of the resource and the timber industry."

Mr Anderson went on to say that "The Wombat Forest Society is sending a clear warning to the members of the timber industry that drive timber production. The general community in the area is not anti-logging, but it is highly critical of the disgracefully over-cut forests. If Midways or Black Forest Sawmill or others think that they can use this next 3 year period to rip out as much timber and woodchips as it can, or target the very best bits of bush left, then you risk having the community turn entirely against you."
The Reserve design for the Wombat is still not adequate, with Blackwood and the Lerderderg River getting too little and some forest types needing greater protection. The WFS applauds the efforts of the 'Actively Conserving Trentham' for its campaign and win for the areas abutting the town. Also the Bullengarook Landcare for the Pyrete Ranges. The RFA also has the Cobaws unavailable for logging.

Communities all around this region should be grateful to the dozens of people who participated and fought for our forests in the RFA. The submissions that where produced where of a very high quality and did make a difference. It is time that our communities re-unite and work for the future of our forests. The WFS will now be lobbying for the Wombat/Midlands to be used as a pilot for a 'Community Forest Management System.'
"There have been a lot of criticisms of the new State Member for Gisborne, Hon. Joanne Duncan, during the RFA process. The WFS is aware of huge 'behind the scenes' tenacity and time that the Member put in for the forests and the community. The WFS would like to thank Joanne for her dedication." Concluded Mr. Anderson.

WOMBAT FOREST BUS TOURS

Yes, they're back!!!!! The Wombat Forest Society will be running bi-monthly bus tours into the Wombat Forest beginning Sunday, 25th June, 2000. The bus tours will leave from the Powerhouse (9 Vincent Street, Daylesford) at 10pm. The forest tours will last for approximately 2 hours and cost $5-$10 depending on numbers. The Wombat Forest tours are an ideal way to familarise yourself with local forest issues and find out more about our ongoing campaign and future directions.

To make a booking, please ring Hugh Burnham on 5348-3617
or the Wombat Forest Society on 5348-1748

POST RFA ACTION

Following further investigation, the Wombat Forest Society has identified several other logging coupes, like those above Wombat Reservoir, Daylesford, that clearly contravene the recently signed Regional Forest Agreement logging perscriptions in the Midlands Forest Management Area. These coupe size anomolies found in the Colbrook (Werribee River) and Kouweingburra (Moorabool River) water supply catchments have wide ranging implications to the water supply of both Ballan and Geelong.

"This year, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment plan to log several large Shelterwood 2 coupes in designated water supply catchmements, arguing that coupe size limitations do not apply to these silviculture areas," says Peter O'Mara, Wombat Forest Society spokesperson. "The Wombat Forest Society believe that this proposed logging highly questionable, perhaps illegal, especially in designated catchments that have previously been subjected to Land Use Determinations that limit the size of coupes and other activities to protect recognised water values. The West Victorian RFA clearly ratifies the restrictions on coupe size, yet DNRE have scheduled several Shelterwood 2 coupes many times larger than the stated maximum coupe size. Regional forest planning rely on these forest management plans for fundamental protection of environmental, cultural and resource values within our local forests but seem to be totally compromised when conflicting with logging interests. Corporate greed has been given precedent over community need."

Athough the Colbrook water supply catchment has a coupe size limitation of 5ha, one of the proposed coupe is 82ha. DNRE propose to log 184ha in one year.

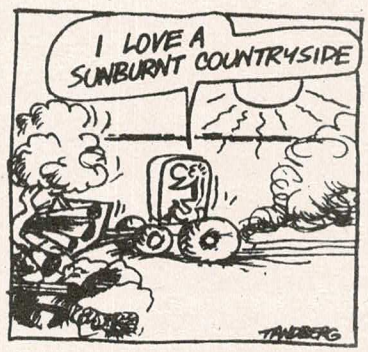
"The Midlands Forest Management Plan in Designated water supply areas limits the proportion of regrowth up to 20 years old to a maximum of 20%, yet the three Colbrook coupes, Gentle Annie Track, Big Tree and Paradise Road amount to 14.5% of the designated State Forest water supply catchmement area being logged in one year. The names of these coupes would now appear to be a cruel and twisted joke."

Furthermore, the proposed logging coupes in the designated Kouweingburra water supply catchment contravene DNRE perscriptions of a maximum coupe size for this area of 15ha.

"Once again, these coupe sizes contravene the DNRE perscriptions and make a mockery of the protection of water supply catchments. If these two coupes, Squires Track and Broken Track, total size 86ha, are added to next years proposed logging schedule of 100ha, then 15.7% of the designated water catchment area will be logged in three years. These figures are totally unacceptable to the local community expectation of responsible and sustainable forest management. Water production and quality considerations must be given priority especially in catchments of limited streamflow that sevice regions with high current or potential deamand. The water issue is the big challenge of future forest management practices and ongoing consultation should be undertaken between DNRE, water supply authorities and the local community."

E-MAIL NETWORK

The Wombat Forest Society now has an e-mail network. Thanks to a bit of pushing from our hardworking member, Suresh Pathy, the Wombat Forest Society has moved into the new technological age. The e-mail/internet thing is a fantastic campaign tool and hopefully will enable the Wombat Forest Society committee to develop a more efficient communication link with our members. The e-mail network can be accessed by sending to **wombatwfs@telstra.com** to register your address. Alternatively, members can provide their e-mail address via their membership renewal. If you have already supplied your e-mail address please do so again as we have had some difficulty with several of our members addresses. Anyway, welcome to the New Age..



A LITTLE PIECE OF MY HEART

Find below an extract from a speech given by Cecilia Rodriguez of the Ejercito Zapatista de Libercion Nacional, an indigenous army based in the mountains of southeatern Chiapas, Mexico. The speech was delivered to the Native Forest Network Conference in Missoula, Montana on November 11, 1994. From 1981 to 1989, 2,444,700 cubic metres of precious woods, conifers and tropical trees were taken from the state of Chiapas, and that in 1988, the explotation of these trees produced $8 million in profit, six thousand percent more than 1980. The Zapatistas have declared war on the Mexican Government in order to save the rainforests (& other environmental resources) of Chiapas from the destructive claws of US Multinationals.

....."We have heard the doublespeak of the powerful: where he says peace, he makes war. Where he says life, he gives death. Where he says respect, he decrees degradation. Where he says truth only lies walk. Today, our sorrow turns to seek a place in your hearts. Our thoughts ask little, only that you no longer hold back your desire to find that lost dignity. We only ask that a small piece of your heart be Zapatista. That it will never sell out. That it never surrender. That it resist. That you continue in your places and with your means to struggle forever so that dignity and not poverty be the harvest in all corners of our nation. Good people of the Native Forest Network, I ask that your heart be Zapatista, so that human dignity is the harvest in all corners of the globe. Thank you very much for your attention.

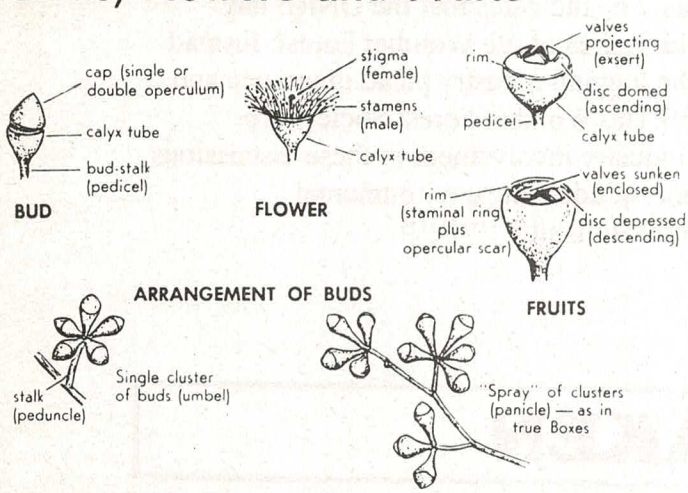
Cecilia Rodreguiz

WESTERN VICTORIAN FOREST PROTECTION NETWORK

The Western Victorian Forest Protection Network has now grown to twenty-three regional groups and has become a strong lobbying mechanism for the diverse range of non-timber stakeholders across the large geographical spread of the West Victorian RFA. Most recently, we have met with the Conservation Minister, Sherryl Garbutt, to voice our collective concerns about the flawed RFA procsss and ongoing forest management issues. Although, the minister's response to some of our concerns held the usual puppetted government line, we did mange to deal with some of our local campaign issues including more open access to DNRE information, release of important documents and interim protection of logging coupes in the Coobobonee State Forest.Unfortunately, the National Estate listing as an important mineral springs recharege are continues to be given minimal consideration by DNRE despite our sustained campaign. The handling of the National Estate issue within the West Victorian RFA was nothing more than a tokenistic community exercise. An absolute joke!!!! The Western Victorian Forest Protection Network has set up an e-mail facility (thank-you, Geelong Community Forum) for all non-timber stakeholder groups, or individuals, within the Western region. This e-mail facility has proved itself to be an invaluable campaign tool. If anyone would like to go onto the Western Victorian Forest Protection Network e-mail list, you could contact Peter O'Mara (petero@telstraeasymail.com.au) and he could recommend your inclusion. All e-mail inclusion have to be ratified by member groups. The ongoing role of the WVFPN, post RFA, will continue as most groups have indicated that the network be maintained. The WVFPN will be meeting in Camperdown in June to discuss future direction and possible strategy. If any Wombat Forest Society would like to attend you are welcome. Contact us for more information. Recently, the WVFPN have successfully lobbied on behalf of the Portland Field Naturalist in having the moratorium on ring culling reinstated in the Cobbobonee State Forest.

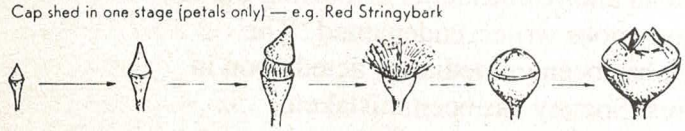
Eucalypts

Buds, Flowers and Fruits

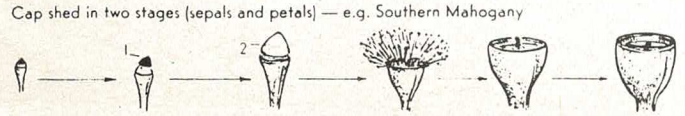


TWO TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT

Cap shed in one stage (petals only) — e.g. Red Stringybark

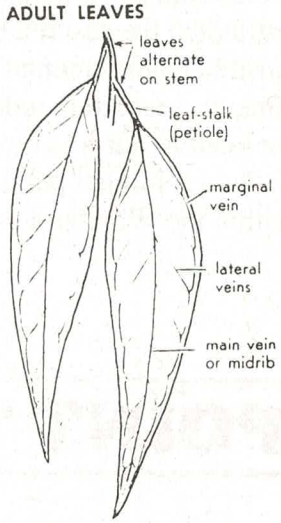


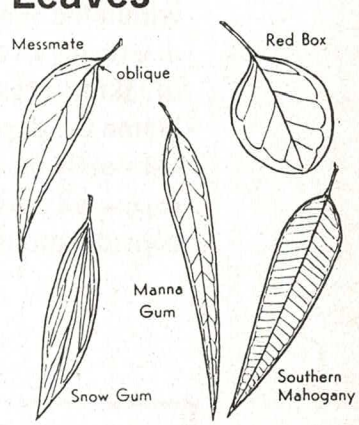
Cap shed in two stages (sepals and petals) — e.g. Southern Mahogany



Examining the Leaves

ADULT LEAVES

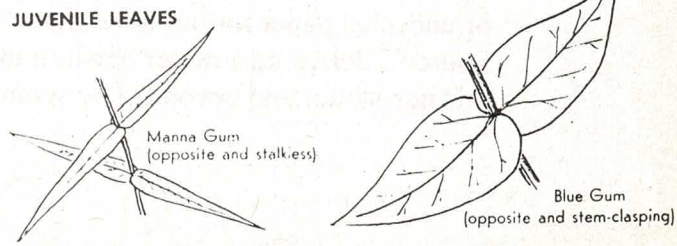




Illustrating some variations in:

1. Size
2. Shape
3. Angle of lateral veins to midrib
4. Distance of marginal veins from edge.

JUVENILE LEAVES



TELL ME THAT IT ISN"T TRUE?

The logging industry have been consistently telling local communities throughout the West Victorian RFA process that they look after our local forests and its many biodiversity considerations. Yeah Right!!! A recent meeting of about 40 sawmill owners and logging contractors in Ballarat with Federal Forestry Minister, Wilson Tuckey, exposed the real truth.....SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT & BIODIVERSITY OUTCOMES are not on their agenda. In short, it is just business as usual. Greed. Greed. More Greed. Amongst the suggested options to increase the logging industry diminishing resource base are these unbelievable suggestions.

1. Decrease in existing Reserves & the right to log some before they are set as reserves.
2. No 10% contingency buffer in sustainable yeild calculations.
3. Harvest all low production forests.
4. Delay in implementing 10 ha and less logging ares.
5. Lessening of Code Of Forest Practise for the Midlands Forest Management Area
6. The use of fertilisers and intensive thinning to accelerte growth rates.
7. Massive increase in pulp production (ie. Woodchips).
8. Relaxation of Code Of Forest Practises to enable logging of stream side buffers zones and other protected areas.
9. Aggregate the protection Environmental Vegitation Classes to increase areas available for logging.
10. Two year deferral of conservation and habitat reserves so that some cam be logged.

The attitude of this meeting displays utter contempt for our local communities expectation of a responsible logging industry and sound government management of our forest resource. As well as a total lack of interest in the retention of forest biodiversity values. It should be noted that the proposed conservation reserve system within the West Victorian RFA, inadequate as it is, indicates that the DNRE has drastically overestimated the sustainable yeild figures of the Wombat Forest. Instead of taking a responsible environmental line, the logging industry plead ignorance and blame the department. Absolutely ludicrous!!! The Wombat Forest Society are extremely disappointed in our local logging industry involvement in these discussions espescially given their continual public support of adequate environmental considerations within the Wombat Forest. Total Bullshit!!!!!!!!!!!!

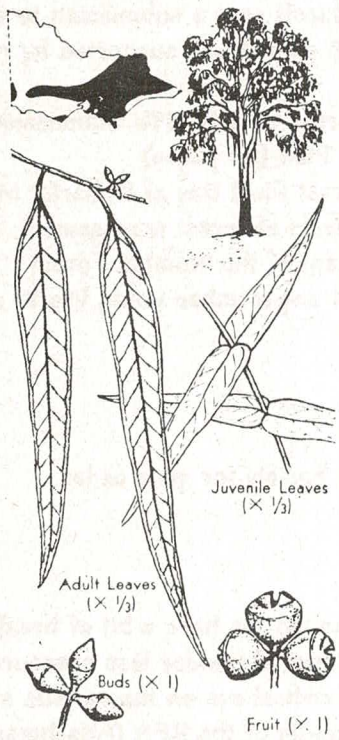
POINT TAKEN

The Wombat Forest Society recently recieved an anonymous letter criticising our use of uncycled paper for our newsletter. The anonymous writer, codenamed "The Source", delivered a rather harsh tirade which has been immediately acted upon in this newsletter and beyond. The Wombat Forest Society has been mistaken.....

TREES OF THE WOMBAT FOREST

Copyright: Trees Of Victoria....L.F.Costermans

Manna Gum (Ribbony Gum)



OCCURRENCE: Wide distribution, mainly along watercourses in hilly country, and on deep fertile soils. Generally associated with Stringybarks, Peppermints and other Gums.

APPEARANCE: Very variable. Tall in mountain forests, generally clean white trunks. In flat open country, small and spreading with rougher bark. **Branchlets drooping, narrow leaves** (*viminalis* means "willow-like").

BARK: Usually smooth, white, peels in long ribbons; rough at base. **A rough-barked form on coastal sands.**

LEAVES: Adult — Long, narrow; bright green both sides.

Juvenile — Opposite, stalkless, bright green and sword-shaped.

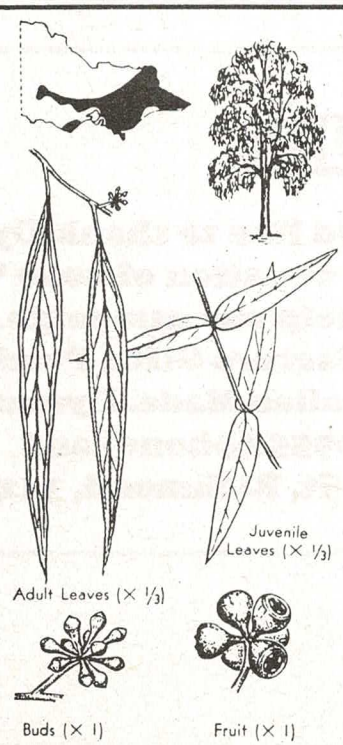
BUDS: Usually in 3's (sometimes 5's). Flowering variable, chiefly summer.

FRUIT: Usually in 3's, 3-4 valves.

WOOD: Pale brown, fair fuel (burns quickly). Poor for poles and other construction (tends to warp).

GENERAL: Forms many hybrids. The main tree for koalas. Risky to camp under as wood may rot from inside and trees or limbs fall unexpectedly. **Distinguish from Candlebark Gum (22) by juvenile leaves, and from other Gums by fruit and buds.**

Narrow Leaved Peppermint



OCCURRENCE: Widely distributed mainly at moderate elevations in cool districts. Often on poor shallow soils. In mixture with Messmate (47), Broad-leaved Peppermint (44) and others of foothill forest association.

APPEARANCE: Small to medium size. **Foliage dark green, fine and weeping.**

BARK: Grey, closely sub-fibrous, interlaced, persistent on trunk and large branches.

LEAVES: Adult — Thin and narrow; dark grey-green and dull; strong smelling and with many oil dots. Veins faint, at small angle to mid-rib, marginal vein remote from edge.

Juvenile — Narrow, green, opposite, on roughened stems.

BUDS: Small and very numerous (8-16 per cluster); caps tiny and pointed. Flowers October-January.

FRUIT: Small, pear shaped; flattish top, usually 4 valves at disc level.

WOOD: Pale brown, not reliable for timber. Fair fuel (burns quickly).

GENERAL: Distinguish from Broad-leaved Peppermint (44) by narrower leaves (especially juvenile).

SHINING PEPPERMINT (*E. nitida*) is a small tree in several coastal localities, has smooth limbs, shiny leaves, similar fruits with reddish discs.

JOHN'S WORLD

Wombat Forest Society committee member John Endacott sent a submission to the West Victorian RFA Independant Panel. This submission (8 pages) was supported by two appendices.....

A. Revision of Flora & Fauna Chapter of Wombat Forest Society 1996 Submission to DNRE regarding the proposed Midlands FMA Management Plan (20 pages)

B. Revision of Regeneration presentation for the Forest Field Day at Bullarto, May 1999.

John's RFA submission, although covering many aspects of forest management, concerntrates on Flora & Fauna aspects of management of the Wombat Forest.

Rather than waste paper (and trees) here and now, if any member would like to read a copy of this submission, you have three choices

1. Obtain a copy on 3 1/2" floppy disk ($1)
2. Obtain a hard copy (printed)..cost $6
3. Receive the submission via e-mail (free)

Whatever your choice, please contact Wombat Forest Society for your order.

Looking Ahead

Now that the Regional Forest Agreement has been signed, we have a bit of breathing space, but there will still be a huge amount of work to do-hopefully under less pressure.

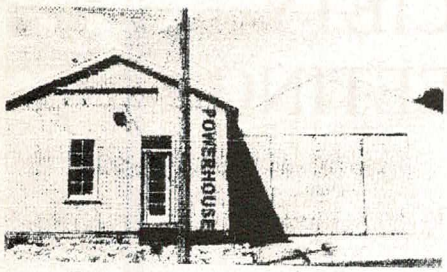
We will need to remain active to keep a watchful and critical eye on the various studies and investigations which are required as conditions of signing of the RFA (Attachments #1-11 West Victorian RFA)

Also we will be keenly looking forward to the scheduled review of the Midlands FMA Management Plan, and believe that from the start it is a very defective document, but at least there will be a chance to have it improved by the process of review.

John Endacott

THANK YOU!!!!!

The Wombat Forest Society would like to thank Dynamo House Pty Ltd for their generous donation of 2000 'Save The Wombat Forest' stickers to help our campaign. Dynamo House design and manufacture Gifts, Products & Publications. All items are Australian Made. Dynamo House can be contacted on 9427-0955.(phone) and 9429-8036 (fax)...4-10 Yorkshire St, Richmond, 3121.....



Daylesford Powerhouse

Contemporary Arts

9 Vincent St. Daylesford 3460 Tel 03 5348 4080
Email phousart@netconnect.com.au Fax 03 5348 4380

Gallery opening hours: Friday - Monday, 1pm-6pm or by appointment

Dear Art Lovers,

Daylesford Powerhouse presents you with a brief calendar of events and exhibitions in 2000 to all of which you are always welcome. We hope you will take note of the dates of our openings and exhibition times and come along to make each event a dynamic cultural experience.

Tuesday Jan 25 *TRAVEL – WORDS MOVE*
Poetry and performance night
7.30 for 8.00pm start. $3.00entry

February 4 - 21 *Amanda Wright and Donna Saunders*
LUSTRE - Ballarat painters
Opening Saturday February 5th, 2pm

Feb 25 – Mar 13 *David Beaumont*
***Recent works** from Ballarat abstractionist*
Opening Saturday Feb 26 at 2.30pm

Mar 17 – April 3 *Natasha Dusenjko &*
Staumn Hunder
Sculpture & Installation
Opening Sat March 18, 6pm

Sat April 15th *MEXICO EXPERIENCES*
Cate Kennedy & Phil Larwill present an evening of their experiences in Mexico, 7pm

Apr 21 – May 2 *Cate Kennedy & Phil Larwill*
Photos of Mexico

Tues April 25th ***Writers night***
Powerhouse fundraiser

Apr 28 – May 15 *To be announced*

May 19 – Jun 5 *Mark Worrall*
Resident Powerhouse artist
Drawing & Photography
Opening Fri 19, 6pm

June 9 - 26 *To be announced*

Jun 30 – Jul 17 ***Utopia / Dystopia***
Destiny Deacon, Ricky Maynard & Harri Higgs
photography & fibre works
Curated by Kathryn Wells
Opening Fri June 30, 6pm

July 21 – Aug 7 *Petrus Spronk*
renowned local artist
Opening Thurs July 20, 6pm

August 11 – 28 *Cindy Wood, Ina Shanahan & Anselm Hogg*
UNLOCKING THE BODY: re-membering"
a mixed media event
Painting, sculpture, installation, performance, poetry

Sept 1 – 18 *Mapiyal Artists.*
Indigenous artists based in Ballarat

Sept 22 – Oct 9 *Alan Bates*
New paintings
Opening Sat Sept 23, 3pm

Oct 13 – 30 *Lyn Hovey and Reg Dodd*
Regional painter & Arabunna photographer
Photographs & paintings of Lake Eyre region
Opening Sat Oct 14, 3pm

Nov 3 – 20 *Amanda Rowland and Pamela Miller*
Sculptures & drawings
Opening Thursday Nov 2, 6pm

Nov 24 – Dec 11 *David M. Lewis & Annie Haines*
Two local sculptors
Opening Sat Nov 25, 3pm

Dec 15 – 25 *Alec Cimera*
local painter
Opening Fri Dec 15, 6pm

Dec26 – Jan16 *Robyn McNicol*
Guest sculptor from Tasmania
Installation & performance

NOTE: Schedule subject to change.

WOMBAT FOREST SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
August 15,2000

Guest Speaker
Anthony Amis
Forest Campaigner
Friends of the Earth
Topic: Plantations & Timber Certification

Daylesford Powerhouse
9 Vincent Street
Light Refreshments Available
Meeting begins at 7.30pm

Organic & Bio Dynamic Vegies

at Continental Market

Open Thursday 11.30-3.30pm

at Continental House, 9 Lone Pine Ave, Hepburn Springs

Continental Market is located in a beautiful setting underneath the long wide verandahs of Continental House. Surrounded in gardens, Conti Market has a laid-back, friendly atmosphere where children are more than welcome.

Conti Market offers entirely organic/bio-dynamic fresh produce. We support local growers when possible.

Our bulk foods room contains a range of dried foods and soy products.

Conti Market is committed to minimal packaging for people who wish to shop without damaging the environment.

Whether you are a home or a business, Conti Market's Home Delivery Service delights in bringing to your doorstep your selection of our entire range of fresh and bulk foods. To place your order, call our message bank on...

5348 4368

...anytime on Tuesday or before 3pm on Wednesday, and leave your name, address and contact number, and of course your vegie and bulk foods order, to be delivered on Thursday afternoon.

WOMBAT FOREST SOCIETY WESTERN VICTORIAN RFA SUBMISSION

Find below, part thereof, the Wombat Forest Society submission to the Independant Panel of the West Victorian Regional Forest Agreement. Obviously, it is difficult to provide all our inputs into the process but hopefully this will provide some insight into our approach. Other components of this submission included Flora & Fauna detail by John Endacott, Wombat Forest Society commissioned fauna & flora studies by renowned naturalists Lincoln Kern and Barry Traill, RFA Social Assessment analysis by Peter O'Mara, Flora and Fauna Report by the Wombat Forest Society Flora and Fauna Committee and the Wombat Forest Society 'Critique Of The Sustainable Yeild Modelling' for the Midlands Forest Management Area by Tim Anderson. All these reports are available from the Wombat Forest Society office.We encourage all members to contact our committee regarding any component of our submission and West Victorian Rgional Forest Agreement campaign.

SUBMISSION DETAIL

Non-Timber Resources

Water

An immediate fast-tracking of the processing for the 'Nomination for listing of the Mineral Springs and their Recharge Areas' by the Australian Heritage Commission is needed. This would fulfill previous commitments that the Mineral Spring Listing would be carried out during the RFA process. The Wombat Forest Society does not believe that proper consideration has been given to the possible effect that particular forestry practises may have on the spring's recharge zone. As the Mineral Springs are the most important feature of the region, and underpins the region's economy, the Wombat Forest Society insist that the work to properly identify and protect the recharge areas for the Springs must commence immediately.

The commencement of a full hydrological; study for Western Victoria. This study should investigate all surface and groundwater systems in this part of the State. This study is of greater importance to West Victoria then the Snowy Scheme. Until this study is done and management strategies and principle are developed, we cannot guarantee that land management and utilisation will not be creating negative hydrological effects in the future. Water is the issue, the future and the main limiting factor for the future of Western Victoria.

A full economic comparison between the timber and water values from the Wombat Forest and the Otway Ranges. This should cover a number of 'option' or 'scenario' comparisons based on rotation length and silvicultural technique.
Water, both surface and groundwater, is the main issue for the West of the State for the future. It is imperative that all land use activities are put within their context of potential risks/ impacts on either surface of groundwater supplies.

Small Towns/ Tourism

A 3km buffer around the Blackwood/Barry's Reef area. This would be to preserve the landscape values of these towns. This area survives on the tourism it currently attracts and has the future potential to expand upon. This area is popular for the natural beauty of the Wombat Forest and the Lerderderg River valley, which surrounds the town.
An extension of the Lerderderg State Park to include the Pyrites, already set aside within the consultation paper, and the headwaters of the Lerdederg River, bounded by Coopers & Wild Dog Road to the north, trentham/Greendale Road to the east, Blackwood Ridge Road to the south and Camp Road to the west. This area has high water catchment significance, valuable non-timber interest, biodiversity importance and, what is now, a diminishing forest landscpae beauty. The State Park should be a dedicated reserve. This important area is the last remaining substainal stand of significant trees within the Wombat Forest (50 sq kilometres) and has invaluable tourism potential.
The application of SPZ status to the two coupes that abut the Trentham/Daylesford rail reserve. This strip of bush is the most important future tourism extension asset that Trentham has. To link the current Daylesford /Bullarto tourist rail line through to Trentham, would have a boom effect on the town. Tourists that visit Daylesford would be able to catch a train to Trentham, have lunch, and rail back. Extending the tourism reach of both towns and the hamlets in between.
Assessment of the two coupes with regards to sawlog availability, reveals that there are few sawlogs and that mostly of the trees will go as woodchip. In terms of sheer economics, these coupes will contribute more to the region's future than the proposed logging. If the RFAs are about balance, then these coupes should not be logged, but added into the RFA as Special Protection Zones.

Other Forest Products

That the forests of the West be mapped indicating the annual honey productivity of each part of these forests. This information and the economic value of annual honey production be fully considered in the application of silvicultural methods and full forest planning. A comparison of timber royalty (a once in 80 year rotation return) with honey (80 harvests in an 80 year rotation) must be considered with all forest areas where both timber and honey are produced.

Bio-Diversity Issues

The WFS has commissioned two studies into the area of Bio-diversity. These are attached to this submission. One is by Barry Trail and covers 'fauna' whilst the other is by Lincoln Kern, and covers 'flora'. These form the basis of the Wombat Forest Society submission in this area.

Also attached is a report by three well-known local naturalists and contains valuable 'local knowledge' perspectives.

Below are some specific comments relevant to a numberof issues raised in the Consultation Paper.

* That a better proportional mix of 'floristic communities' for the 'Herb Rich Foothill' Ecological Vegetation Class be included in the Midlands Forest Management Area.
The proposed SPZs (Special Protection Zones) have a greater proportion of the low rain fall/poorer soil forests protected in comparison to what is indicated on the pre-1750 EVC extent map as the floristic communities that would have been here. A major proportion of this EVC would have covered the volcanic soils/high rainfall areas between Ballarat and Kyneton. More of the Upper Loddon part of this EVC needs to be included, as this would be more representative. This should not be done by removing the areas already covered in the Consultation Paper, but by adding more area. This EVC has only received 30% Protection instead of the 60% identified as necessary to reserve for it status.

* The proposed Lineal Reserves for the Wombat are excessive. The aggregate area has a too high an 'edge to area ratio'. The area covered by SPZs in the Wombat conains nearly half the area being made up by these 'lineal reserves'. For a properly 'Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative' system to be applied, the proportion of the lineal coupes does not satisfy the above criteria. These corridors are important to maintain, but the WFS believes that additions to EVC areas need to be made of 2/3rds the aggregate area from each respective area currently covered by the lineal coupes.

* Placing reserves in areas that are not available to logging makes a mockery of the intent of the RFAs.

* Preservation of all 'wet gullies' and riparian areas within the forests. To ensure that these areas are not dried out by any adjacent logging, the application of an additional 50 meter buffer from the edge of all riparian vegetation or high water or flood mark is imperative.

Timber Industry

* The West Victorian RFA Consultation Paper has announced that the 'Sustainable Sawlog Yield' for the Midlands Forest Management Area needs to be reduced to 40 000-m3 p.a. The Wombat Forest Society predicts a further drop in the Sawlog Yield from the RFA, as a result of the commissioned, independent audit of the modeling for the Midlands.

* The WFS suggests that a step in preserving some of the local timber industry and thereby 'jobs' could be achieved with a new strategy to gain maximum sawlog recovery from all forest operations. The current log grading as practised in the Midlands, is allowing parts of the industry to 'prune' the trees in the bush to down grade sawlogs that the industry really does not want, into residual or pulp wood. There is also a too common practice of cutting 2-3 meters from the base of the big trees in order to make the tree fit the available size of the sawmiller's saws. These sections of tree left behind in the bush have been modeled as sawlog, and should come off the sustainable yield. By ensuring that ever possible part of the felled trees should be recovered as sawlog and processed accordingly. This will help maintain throughput to mills.

* A new strategy for the immediate application of a stand spacing program in forests such as the Enfield and Pyrannes Forests. The aim would be to space the existing trees to allow the maximum potential 'growth release response' to these forest stands, while minimizing impacting of regrowth on water resources. To maximise the spread in forest age classes for bio-diversity purposes. The aim would be to quickly convert these into an interim volume of sawlogs (all be it small) for perhaps 20 to 25 years from now. This would help to balance the sustainable yield for the Midlands Forest Management Area. A discussion with a number of forest scientists recently has confirmed that these trees will respond to being 'released' by adjustments to tree spacing.

* The RFA needs to provide adequate compensation or restructuring packages that allow the industry to restructure to facilitate a full lateral processing/recovery system is needed based on the available resource, not part thereof. RFA FISAP money should have restructuring, retooling and exit scheme money as the main use of available funds. The use of this money for marketing and promotion should reflect the broad output of the timber industry and be a part of an overall strategy.

* A review of the structure and function of the commercial arm of Department of Natural Resources and Environment (Forest Victoria), to audit the activities and actions of this section at meeting the requirements of the Forest Act 1958 and the full and proper implementation of the Timber Industry Strategy, as originally intended by the previous Labor Government in the late 1980's.

* Midway's pending RFA dependent license for woodchips of 80 000 tons should not be enacted. The change of silvicultural approach in the low yielding forests to the strategy suggested in point 2, coupled with the adjustments to log utilisation for best usage, the applications of the CAR Reserves and the downsizing in sustainable yield identified as a part of the WEST RFA process, means that the current license to export woodchips should be sufficient. The case might well be found that almost no residual wood will available for export woodchipping, after the applications of the many layers of intermediate processing of lesser grade parts of felled trees is implemented.

* Any exit packages must be agreeable to the CFMEU and must provide adequate compensation packages to all timber workers, not just mills and contractors.

* A strategy for a reforestation Plan to supplement future wood and fiber production as well as acting as a tool in the fight against salinity. These areas should be aimed at mimicking a natural forest system. It should have the aim of supplying short, medium and long-term timber. These areas should contain an understory and be managed along the principle of restoration forestry and not farming principles. The design and siting of these areas should entail full environmental, hydrological and social impact studies.

* An immediate Action Plan in the development of processing, products and marketing of products made from C and D grade sawlogs. Our forests produce around two-thirds to three-quarters C and D grade sawlogs, yet the whole product focus of the timber industry is based on B grade logs. Research and Development for lateral value adding is needed.

* The WFS believes that a 'Radcon, Radial Sawmill' should be installed at one of the medium size sawmills in the region. This new sawmilling technique is ideally suited to small sawlogs and defects are turned into a feature by the process. The recovery rate per cubic meter of sawlog is around 60% higher than traditional sawmilling. A traditional sawmill recovers around 50% of a log as milled timber, the rest is converted to saw-dust. Radial sawing achieves around 80%.

* That small to medium size sawmills are given equal status and focus within the industry. These smaller mills are better employers on a person per cubic meter of sawlog basis. They also provide employment in smaller towns and hamlets in regional Victoria.

* Utilisers of resources from State Forests must accept that they have an 'environmental, economic and social' responsibility, when they choose to make use of Public Forests.

* A firewood strategy should be developed. This will need a long time frame approach. The firewood market is entrenched in redgum and box/ironbark. These supplies are diminishing and a reasonable change over and buyer acceptance should be allowed for.

* All commitments before, during and downstream of the RFAs must have specific time frame requirements specified.

* That the Wombat Forest/Midlands Forest Management Area should be used as a pilot for the implementation of a 'community or model forestry management' scheme. The manner by which the local timber industry, the workers and the conservationists of the region have been working together for a better future for our forests for the last 8-10 years, places the region in the 'box-seat' for such a trial.

WOMBAT FOREST SOCIETY & THE MEDIA

The last twelve months has shown an unprecedented coverage of Wombat Forest issues in the Melbourne press. A strong relationship has developed between The Age environmental jornalist, Claire Miller, and the Wombat Forest Society. The Wombat Forest Society has been encouraged by the willingness of The Age to focus on the local forest campaigns as an important environmental issue instead of just relying on the peak environment groups. The increasing profile of local environment campagins, such as the Wombat Forest Society, OREN, Tambo Environmental Awareneess Group, Portland Field Naturalsits, has provided for a more substainal regional input into the investigative and informative work of our print media. The Wombat Forest Society has featured in six Age articles this year alone, including the Age Feature, "A Lot Of Explaining To Do" on March... Unfortunately, the mainstream television and radio broadcasters continue to overlook the regional issues unless they have some arrest footage or cute koalas although our local WIN telvision station has shown itself to be an exception. In fact, Time Anderson (WFS Prsident) was seen himself holding a young baby in a recent television interview. Nice touch Tim!!!!

and finally.....

The Wombat Forest will be running a couple of community spaces in each newsletter for members with environmentally friendly businesses to advertise (free of charge) or for other local campaign information. Please call or send into our office any such details.

Wombat Forest Society Inc.

Wild and Wonderful Wood and Water Work and Wildlife

Membership includes the Society's newsletter, the "Wombat Forest Guardian", special mailouts and discounts to WFS functions.

[redacted] Subscription:

- ☐ Individual – $16 p.a.
- ☐ Concession – $12 p.a.
- ☐ Household – $18 p.a.

Use this space to order garments, information etc.:

- ☐ I would like
- ☐ I would like
- ☐ I can help by

Name

Address

Postcode

Phone No

☐ I would like to donate: $_____

Please mail to: Wombat Forest Society Inc.
PO Box 428, Daylesford, 3460

All details are strictly confidential

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If undeliverable please return to
Wombat Forest Society
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Daylesford, 3460

CAN YOU HELP?

THE WOMBAT FOREST SOCIETY COMMITTEE NEEDS HELP. WE ARE FEW IN NUMBERS AND DOING A LOT OF WORK TO PROTECT OUR FOREST. IF WE HAVE MORE PEOPLE READILY AVAILABLE TO SHARE THE WORKLOAD IT MAY MEAN LESS PERSONAL SACRIFICE ALL-ROUND, AND WE MAY ACTUALLY ACHIEVE MORE. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO MORE THAN JUST SENDING MONEY, PLEASE LET US KNOW. WE ARE INTERESTED IN PEOPLE WHO ARE PREPARED TO CONTRIBUTE TIME, INTELLECT AND EFFORT. IF YOU HAVE PREVIOUSLY OFFERED HELP, THANK-YOU-BUT PLEASE DO SO AGAIN. THE WOMBAT FOREST NEEDS HELP.

WFS-ph/fax (03) 5348-1748