



ANGFA

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VICTORIA Inc. Regional Group

# VICNEWS

Number 125 June 2022

ANGFA Victoria Inc. is a regional group member of AUSTRALIA NEW GUINEA FISHES ASSOCIATION INC.

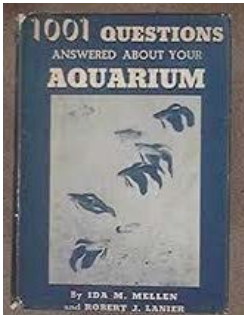
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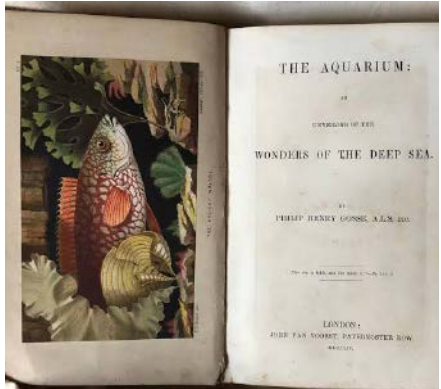
***“History of the Aquarium”***  
***A look back in time through a book collection, and the impact of the authors and early pioneers on uncovering the aquatic world.***  
**Gerard Carmody is guest presenter for our next club meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022**



Antiquarian books give us insight into how the fish keeping hobby has dramatically changed over the last 4,500 years.



Gerard Carmody has been keeping fish for many years and in this time has been collecting antiquarian books on the hobby. A great many of us fish keepers collect fish books so this will be a most interesting presentation.



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## President's Report June 2022



Welcome to VICNews 125! With Covid becoming a distant memory, our club is finally settling into a more familiar rhythm again.

We have had a couple of great club meetings at the Aquarium Society of Victoria club rooms since the last newsletter in February. Our March meeting featured a great presentation from Phil Littlejohn on his New Guinea trip in 1999, searching for the Lake Wanam Rainbowfish. With his characteristic collection of great little stories (some of them quite hair-raising) and accompanied by fantastic footage that hasn't been released till now, Phil's talk was a most enjoyable night!

The next meeting (held a week early than normal on 29th April) started with a fantastic presentation from Henry Albert on pond plants and other things pond related. Following that, we had a mega-auction that was well attended that resulted in some lots achieving some unusually high prices. However, per fish prices were still a bargain for fishes that are not readily available in the hobby.

Since the last club meeting our membership officer Rod has conducted a membership survey asking for feedback on our membership preference for club meeting venue as there had been a number of members pointing out the issues related to parking in Clifton Hill. The results came back 4 to 1 for **The Field Naturalists Club in Blackburn** over the AS of V club rooms at 29 Grant Street in Clifton Hill.



Wild caught Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon from northern Victoria.  
Photo: John Lenagan

I then contacted the president of the FNCV and asked if we would be able to return to their club rooms for our meetings. The answer was yes and the dates for the next 18 months have been booked as follows:

Friday 1st July 2022  
Friday 2nd September 2022  
Friday 4th November 2022

then

Friday 3rd February 2023  
Friday 7th April 2023  
Friday 2nd June 2023  
Friday 4th August 2023  
Friday 6th October 2023  
Friday 1st December 2023

Included in this edition is part 1 of a 2 part article about our partnered Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon conservation project.

Enjoy this edition and see you at the next meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> July!



Dion Lervasi of Austral Research and Consulting, the man who rediscovered the Vic Purple-spotted Gudgeon, with Chris Lamin. Photo: Greg Martin

# Field Trip Files: Nangak Tamboree Wildlife Sanctuary, LaTrobe University, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2022



We had a good turnout for this field trip, representing members from both NFA and ANGFA, and some new faces too. Left to right: Nicholas Abbey, Anthony Urban, Noah and Rob Radavicius, Mark Adams, Lyndon Trickey, Tim Curmi, Dylan Hill, Josh Lay, Henry Albert, Rod Wubben, George Paras and Leah Sullivan. Photo: Greg Martin

In February 2021, one year earlier we ran a NFA/ANGFA combined clubs field trip to Nangak Tamboree Wildlife Sanctuary, with the aim of finding out if there were still Dwarf Galaxias present and also to see what else we could find. Whilst that trip was a very enjoyable one it was disappointing that we only found one Dwarf Galaxias on the day. In that survey we used a lot of blue box traps and there was some chatter about them being a poor choice due to their colour when we got such poor results.

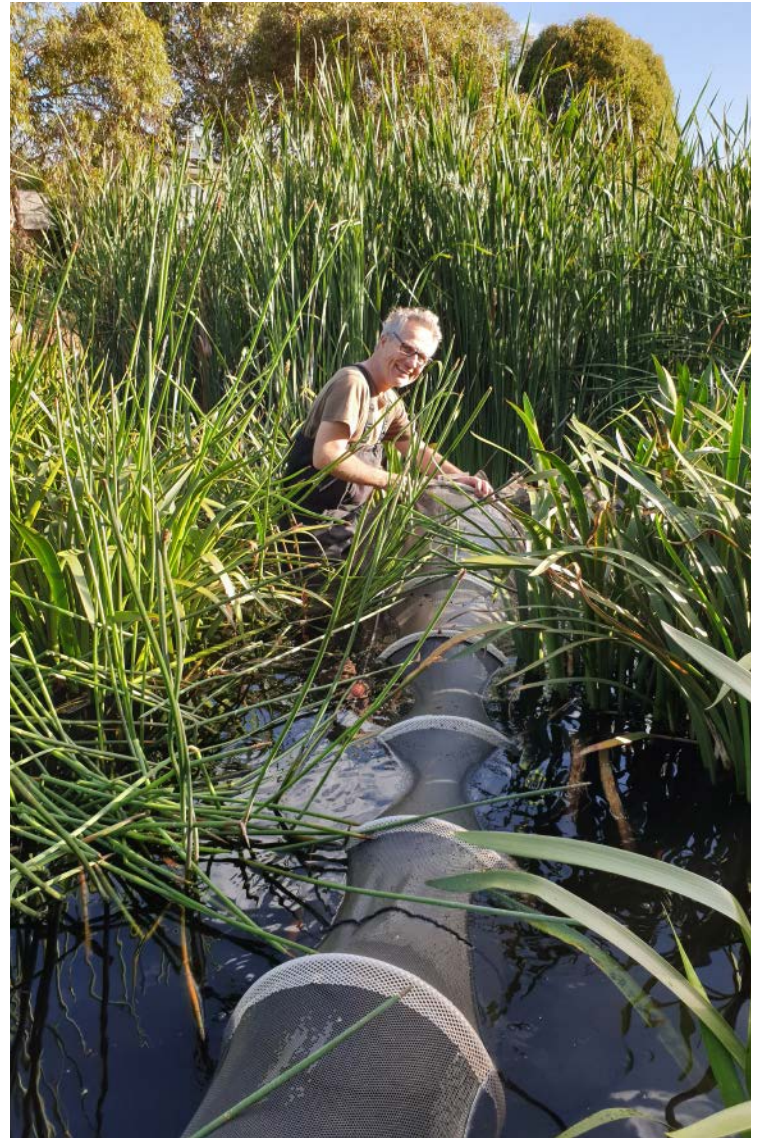
Fast forward a year and we went back to have another look, one year on. On the evening prior to the field trip a group of us went and set the nets. This time we used only brown box traps and we also set

six fyke nets in an area known as The Cascades, just outside of the Sanctuary boundary but that flows into it during stormwater events.

The next day, a stunning sunny Saturday, we had a terrific turnout with members from NFA, ANGFA and some locals as well joining us to see what turned up in the nets. The fyke nets produced a lot of Yabbies and Flathead Gudgeon at the Cascades, as well as a number of Eastern Longneck Turtles, Goldfish and a few Weather Loaches. George Paras



Above left: Lush growth of Triglochin, Varius sedges and reeds provide good habitat for Dwarf Galaxias in the large pond located near the Wildlife Sanctuary buildings. Above right: The day before the field trip Tim Curmi and Anthony Urban carefully set box traps in preparation for the following day. Photos: Greg Martin.



Mark Adams, Eve Nobes and Anthony Urban setting fyke nets and box traps in preparation for the field trip survey the next morning. Photos: Greg Martin



The Cascades, located within an attractive housing development upstream from the Nangak Tamboree Wildlife Sanctuary. After leaving a series of ponds here, stormwater enters the sanctuary on its eastern boundary. Photo: Greg Martin



Lyndon Trickey and Mark Adams carefully removing Dwarf Galaxias from a box trap. Photo: Greg Martin



Flathead Gudgeon from the lower Cascades pool. These fish were released into this location a number of years ago and appear to have been recruiting. Photo: Greg Martin



Josh Lay checking out fish in the field tank held by Rod Wubben. Photo: Greg Martin



Lyndon Trickey, Henry Albert and Mark Adams bring a fyke net in, which included removing the star stakes from deep mud. Photo: Greg Martin



told us "... the Flathead Gudgeon all came from the Yarra River decades ago, from below the dreaded Dight's weir. They've done really well, initially in the Gresswell Grange Lakes catchment, further west, and from there colonised the entire Wildlife Sanctuary and the University Moat system, down to the Darebin Creek. We translocated them to the eastern Springthorpe sub-catchment, to try to safeguard against other feral fish taking hold in the vacant habitat."



Top: Everyone was keen to see what came out of the fyke nets and box traps. Our catch: a huge number of Yabbies (black in colour) of all sizes, lots of Flathead Gudgeon (Photo lower left) and Common Galaxias. Middle right: Mark Adams looking at Flathead Gudgeon and a Common Galaxias in the field tank held by Rod Wubben. An enormous Pobblebonk tadpole (bottom right). Photos: Greg Martin



Top: Mark Adams and Lyndon Trickey retrieve one of the fyke nets. In the upper Cascades we caught several large Goldfish. Bottom: Josh Lay and Eve Nobes checking the fyke net in preparation for shaking the fish into a bucket. Two large coloured goldfish can just be seen through the netting. Photos: Greg Martin



When we retrieved the box traps, and it was clear from pulling the first trap that we were going to see a lot more fish than last year. All in all, the box traps produced 'a couple of dozen' Dwarf Galaxias at least, and this was excellent news for the Sanctuary as well as for Middle Creek Farm, which had a permit to supplement their Dwarf Galaxias broodstock genetics with fish from yet another location.



Above: There were at least 7 Eastern Longneck Turtles trapped in the lower Cascades pool. (Middle left) Dylan Hill show Leah Sullivan how to tell males from females. (Top right) George Paras about to release one of the turtles back to the pond. Photos: Greg Martin





This year there were a lot more Dwarf Galaxias (seen here in the field tank with camera for scale). Photo: Greg Martin

It was a productive and most enjoyable day and we met some great new folk that have a personal interest in seeing that this beautiful wetland thrives in the middle of their lovely suburb. Thank you for

all that attended and also to those who helped set nets before, manage the nets during and were involved in cleaning the nets wash after the event.



Tim Curmi and Chris Lamin. Chris was very happy to be able to add Dwarf Galaxias from this location to her Dwarf Galaxias conservation breeding program, after we had no success last year in finding more than just one individual. Photo: Greg Martin



Mark Adams carefully washing the fyke nets before they are sundried then packing away. If we can't do this rats can eat through the netting to get at dried shrimp and other delicacies. Photo: Greg Martin.



Greg Martin and Mark Adams removing Goldfish from a drain downstream from the Cascades. Photo: George Paras

# Field Trip Files: Kerang area, northern Victoria.

22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Text by Peter Rose, North Central Catchment Management Authority



Third Reedy Lake, Kerang, in the late afternoon. Photo: Greg Martin. Wild caught Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon. Photo: John Lenagan

Victoria's zombie fish are back from the dead, and there are plans underway to return the species to its former range throughout the Murray Corridor.

But first, let's meet this zombie fish! The Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon (*Mogurnda adspersa* – pictured inset, above) is a small,

colourful, and native floodplain specialist fish. Once widespread in wetlands, lakes, billabongs, and slow-flowing river habitats, by the 1970s, the species had all but disappeared from the southern Murray Darling Basin. The decline is likely due to a range of factors including altered flows and loss of permanent floodplain wetlands, poor water quality and habitat, and competition with, and predation by, alien



Some of the field trip attendees. From left to right: Gary Sturdy from Native Fish Australia, Phil Littlejohn from ANGFA, Doug Gimesy, official photographer for the Purple-spotted Gudgeon broodstock collection trip, Thorin Robertson from Austral Research and Mark Toohey from City of Greater Bendigo. Photos: Greg Martin



John Lenagan and Tim Curmi drop Phil Littlejohn off along the bank of a channel of Third Reedy lake. Photo: Greg Martin



Phil Littlejohn doing what he is extremely good at: finding fish. Phil was the first of us to capture one of the prize fish in a dip net on this trip. Photo: Greg Martin.



Top left: Phil Littlejohn and Anthony Sloan look at the striking colouration on a Carp Gudgeon (photo middle right by John lenagan) Phil netted. Top right: Phil looking at a Dwarf Flathead Gudgeon in the bag. Bottom: Anthony Sloan and Peter Rose, both from North Central CMA. Photos: Greg Martin



Chris Lamin (Middle Creek Farm, NFA and ANGFA) discussing strategy with Phil Littlejohn. Photo: Greg Martin

fish species. Before the turn of the 21st century, they were considered extinct in the wild in Victoria, with the last record being from the Cardross lakes in 1998.

In late 2019, two of them were captured during a survey of Third Reedy Lake near Kerang in northern Victoria, as part of a plan to generate water savings for the environment. After the discovery, the Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon Advisory Group was set up with representatives and experts from the Department of Environment, Land, Water, and Planning, North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA), Arthur Rylah Institute, Connections, Goulburn Murray Water, Parks Victoria, the Victorian Environmental Water Holder, and environmental services company Austral Research and Consulting. The group was tasked with developing a plan that worked towards the long-term survival of the species, while enabling the reinstatement of Third Reedy Lake to a more natural state.



Peter Rose sorting broodstock. Fish were sent to Middle Creek Farm in Victoria, and to Aquasave in South Australia. Photo: Greg Martin



Nick Whiterod from Aquasave, testing the dissolved oxygen (DO) in Third Reedy Lake. It was extremely low. Photo: Greg Martin

The drawdown (lowering the water level) of Third Reedy Lake was put on hold, water for the environment was delivered to keep the water level stable, and fieldwork commenced to investigate the distribution and abundance of fish in Third Reedy and other nearby waterways. This included sampling using fyke nets and bait traps, and collection of eDNA samples at about 70 sites throughout the lower Loddon catchment, including the Kerang lakes.

More Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon was soon discovered at Third Reedy Lake, three were found at Kangaroo Lake, eight at Racecourse Lake and 66 at Middle Reedy Lake, next door to the original find.

Another group of 'zombie fish enthusiasts', including North Central CMA staff, Austral Research and Consulting, Native Fish Australia and Australia New Guinea Fishes Association worked to secure the species by starting a captive breeding program and creating insurance populations through the creation of surrogate habitats. This work was funded through a Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning Icon Species grant.



A reporter from the local regional ABC filming Anthony and Thorin checking box traps for Gudgeon on Third Reedy lake. Photo: Greg Martin

The group collected 30 broodstock from Third and Middle Reedy lakes, and breeding commenced with specialist breeders at Middle Creek Farm and Aquasave. The breeding program has been successful, with the production of over 1000 juvenile fish, expected to be ready for release by the end of 2021.

Fin clips taken from the Kerang population are currently being analysed, and this will help inform future breeding and release plans. As an example, these plans may include mixing fish with individuals from South Australia to improve genetic diversity.



Chris Lamin showing the local Aboriginal mob their Purple-spotted Gudgeon. Photo: John Lenagan



Chris Lamin, from Middle Creek Farm, being interviewed by the local ABC, about the Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon conservation program. Photo: John Ienagan.

Meanwhile, North Central CMA's 'Working for Victoria' crews, City of Greater Bendigo Council and landholders have been busily preparing potential release sites, by planting aquatic and riparian vegetation and installing woody habitat.

Final assessment and selection of 2-3 local reintroduction sites will occur over the coming months, with baby zombies due to be released in November 2021, and follow-up monitoring of their establishment shortly thereafter.

The Mid-Murray Recovery Reach Program, established as part of the MDB Native Fish Recovery Strategy, aims to recover floodplain specialist fish in the Murray Corridor. The Program will continue to fund the breeding program, and prepare and maintain additional surrogate sites, such as the [Deniliquin Lagoons](#), which have been earmarked for reintroduction of the zombie fish in 2022.

Text originally published on Finterest on 19th August 2021.



Habitat preparation for potential release sites. Photo: Anthony Sloan.



Potential release sites with aquatic and riparian vegetation, and woody habitat. Photo: Peter Rose.

# Our next field trip: Cannibal Creek, Bunyip North, Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2022



Cannibal Creek at Bunyip North. Photo: John Lenagan

**Where:** Cannibal Creek, Bunyip North, on Bunyip - Tonimbuk Rd where it crosses Cannibal Creek.

GPS coordinates: -38.062334, 145.714308

**Why?** A few reasons:

1. we want to re-survey the areas we surveyed in 2017.
2. and we are looking to catch some *Galaxiella pusilla* to provide genetic diversity for an ongoing Dwarf Galaxias conservation breeding program.

**Meeting at:** 10 am.

**Bring:** waders, buckets, nets, hat, wet weather gear, cameras, field tank, water bottle and a picnic lunch.

**Fishes:** Last time we found Southern Pygmy Perch and Dwarf Galaxias as well as Redfin and Gambusia.

**For more Information:** contact Greg Martin on 0407 094 313.



Sampling Cannibal Creek during our 2017 field trip. Photo: John Lenagan



# Club meeting details and key contacts of ANGFA Vic

## Office Bearers 2022

<b>President:</b> Greg Martin	0407 094 313
<b>Treasurer:</b> John Lenagan	0413 730 414
<b>Secretary:</b> Glenn Briggs	0408 771 544
<b>Grant Applications and Permit Writer:</b> Tim Curmi	0417 419 765
<b>Field Trip Coordinators:</b> Gybe Forster and Greg Martin	0430 118 169 0407 094 313
<b>Field Trip Safety Officer:</b> Rodney Wubben	0409 890 866
<b>Membership Officer:</b> Rodney Wubben	0409 890 866

ANGFA VIC CLUB MEETINGS  
are held at the  
**Field Naturalists Club of Victoria**  
1 Gardenia Street Blackburn, Victoria

Doors open at 7.30pm

### Remaining meeting dates for 2022:

**Friday 1st July 2022**  
Friday 2nd September 2022  
Friday 4th November 2022

### then in 2023:

Friday 3rd February 2023  
Friday 7th April 2023  
Friday 2nd June 2023  
Friday 4th August 2023  
Friday 6th October 2023  
Friday 1st December 2023

## Victorian ANGFA National LIFE MEMBERS

PAST - Ron Bowman and Barry Crockford

and

PRESENT - Neil Armstrong, Glenn & Jenny Briggs,  
Ken Smales and Tony Tucceri

## Other fish groups in Victoria

### Eastern Districts Aquarium Society (EDAS)

Contact: Daryl Maddock (03) 9874 1850

### EDAS Plant Study Group

Contact: Eddie Tootell (03) 9337 6435

### Aquarium Society of Victoria

Contact: Daryl Maddock (03) 9874 1850

### Native Fish Australia Vic.

Contact: Tim Curmi 0417 419 765