



**“Blackwater rescue”. Dr Dion Lervasi, aquatic ecologist of Austral Research and Consulting, is guest presenter at our next club meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023**



Dion Lervasi, being interviewed by the local ABC crew at the initial Purple-spotted Gudgeon release at Ornamental Lake in Mildura in December 2021. Photo: Greg Martin

Dr Dion Lervasi has over 20 years of experience working as an aquatic ecologist. He completed his honours degree at Monash University investigating nitrogen cycling in wetlands before working in Sydney constructing wetlands, including for the Sydney Olympic precinct. He then worked as a research scientist at Monash University before accepting a scholarship to complete a PhD project at Deakin University where he investigated the effectiveness of constructed wetlands to treat wastewater using artificial substrates. Dion has worked for large consultancy firms, universities, as a sole trader, and now as an owner of Austral Research and Consulting.

Dion has extensive biological sampling and identification experience, in addition to managing, conducting and reporting on projects focusing on vegetation, wetlands, fish and macroinvertebrates.

Dion and Jackson Lamin have been involved in extensive fish and crayfish rescue operations during the recent Murray River flood event.



A Murray River Spiny Crayfish climbs a tree to escape the blackwater. Photo: Weekly Times

*“Obi Obi Rhads revisited”.*

Glenn Briggs will give the mini presentation  
at our next club meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023



Obi Obi Creek in the Sunshine Coast hinterland, south east Queensland. Photo: Glenn Briggs



Glenn netting Rhads. Photo: Greg Martin



Rhadinocentrus ornatus from Obi Obi Creek. Photo: Glenn Briggs

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## President's Report January 2023



Welcome to VICNews 127! At our club meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> November, Anthony Despotellis gave a fantastic presentation on the huge issue of polystyrene pollution in our rivers and creeks. Although I think about this a lot, I had no idea that it is such an enormous and complicated issue. A lively and interesting conversation was generated on the night and I think we all left the meeting trying to think of a realistic and effective solution to this pervasive and worsening problem.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of December, ANGFA members who have been involved in the ongoing Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon conservation efforts, attended a release event over two days that included several sites in Bendigo and one site in Deniliquin, NSW.

See pictorial article on page 3.

Our end of year BBQ and catch up on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December was very enjoyable. There were a few members that joined us on the day that would not normally be able to attend a meeting during the week, and as a result we are aiming to have a couple of these events per year on a Saturday. See pictorial article on page 12.

Our club meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> April will be a bit different to our normal format: I will do a mini presentation on the Bendigo Library Native Fishes Aquarium that Aquariums By Design was commissioned to install last year. Then the main part of the meeting will be a 'round table' sharing of member's 'money-saving aquarium hacks'. Topics that will be covered in the discussion will include lighting, heating, filtration, water changes, feeding, foods and general husbandry. Think about what you might like to contribute to the discussion and come prepared to be involved.

Our next field trip will be on Saturday March 4<sup>th</sup> to Centennial Park on the Werribee River (see photo below). Because the weir wall creates an effective barrier to fishes migration, several species congregate at the base. There are picnic facilities so you will be able to cook a BBQ lunch on the day.

### Meeting dates for 2023:

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2023 (a week later due to Easter)

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

Enjoy this edition and we'll see you at the next meeting on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February!



The weir at Centennial Park on the Werribee River. The weir is a major barrier to fishes movements/migration and several species congregate at the base of the wall. This photo was taken on an ANGFA Vic field trip in January 2014, and it will be great to go back after 9 years. Photo: John Lenagan

# Field Trip Files: Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon releases, Bendigo and Deniliquin, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022



Chris Lamin with boxes of Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon bred at Middle Creek Farm. Photo: Greg Martin



Riley Street Wetlands, Bendigo. A habitat restored and revegetated by Mark Toohey and his team at the City of Greater Bendigo Council (COGB). Photo: Greg Martin



Chris Lamin and fish, reluctantly posing for photos for the gathered media. Photo: Greg Martin.



Annalise Varker, an indigenous local, who works at the City of Greater Bendigo Council releases Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon into a pool at Riley Street Wetlands. Peter Rose from North Central CMA and Mark Toohey from COGB look on. Photo: Greg Martin



Peter Rose, Mark Toohey and Annalise Varker release Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon into a second pond at Riley Street wetlands. Photo: Greg Martin



Peter Rose with a container of Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon bred at Middle Creek Farm. Photo: Greg Martin



Harcourt Dog Park, Bendigo. Another habitat beautifully restored and revegited by Mark Toohey and team. Photo: Greg Martin



Lush Myriophyllum growth at the Harcourt Dog Park. Photo: Greg Martin



Chris Lamin releases SPSG at Harcourt Dog Park. Photo: Greg Martin



Elise and Ami from COGB, Chris Lamin, Glenn Briggs and Peter Rose. Photo: Greg Martin



Harcourt Dog Park looking upstream. Photo: Greg Martin



Whittaker Street Wetlands. Enormous diversity of aquatic and marginal vegetation - a superbly restored habitat. Photo: Greg Martin



Glenn Briggs about to release SPSPG at Whittaker Street wetland. Photo: Greg Martin



Above: Glenn releasing SPSPG. Above: beautiful blue damselflies were seen in profusion at this well established habitat. Photos: Greg Martin



A private dam belonging to Graham McDonald. This amazingly productive dam place has produced a staggering 5,000+ Southern Pygmy Perch for repopulating restored local wetlands since they were introduced into this dam more than a year ago. A good example of a surrogate site working well. Photo: Greg Martin



Mark Toohey discusses ongoing aquatic planting plans with Graham McDonald. Photo: Greg Martin



Graham McDonald about to release some Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon into the population of Southern Pygmy Perch to “shake it up a bit”... Photo: Greg Martin





Main photo: another example of a good surrogate site. This private dam in Shelbourne, belonging to Malcolm Swan has no fish but is rich with macroinvertebrates and all manner of living foods. With help from the local LandCare group Malcolm has planted lots of marginal and aquatic vegetation in preparation for stocking with ket local native fishes. (Inset) huge numbers of water mites were seen near the surface of the water. Photos: Greg Martin



Chris Lamin releases the first SPSG into Malcolm's dam. Photo: Greg Martin



Malcolm releasing the second bag of Southern Purple-spotted gudgeon. Photo: Greg Martin



The final surrogate site for the day was this private dam in Axedale, belonging to Michael Gardener. It has a very large population of Flathead Gudgeon and Yabbies. In stocking it with SPSG it is hoped that the Flathead Gudgeon population will eventually be reduced, allowing some Southern Pygmy Perch to survive. Photo: Greg Martin



Owner Michael Gardener releases Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon as Glenn Briggs looks on. Photo: Greg Martin



Fish releases day 2. One of the Deniliquin Lagoons - an interconnected string of wetlands designed and constructed by John Conallin. Photo: Greg Martin



John Conallin talking to a large group of local school kids that have been involved in looking after this wetland, as part of their year 10 curriculum. Photo: Greg Martin



Left to right, John Conallin, Peter Rose, Chris Lamin and Josh Campbell (Local Land Services, Murray, NSW Government). The other photos are from the morning and include fish releases in two of the Lagoons. Photos: Greg Martin

# End of year BBQ and fish release, Nangak Tamboree Wildlife Sanctuary 10<sup>th</sup> December 2022



Attendees of the ANGFA Vic end of year BBQ and catch up, held at the Yellow Box Hut, Nangak Tamboree Wildlife Sanctuary, La Trobe Uni. Photo: Rod Wubben



Dylan Hill, Rod Wubben Peter Gauci and Damian Walsh. Photo: Greg Martin.



Glenn Briggs and Chris Lamin. Photo: Greg Martin.

On Saturday 10th December ANGFA Vic hosted an end of year BBQ and general catch up. It was so good to see the BBQ being well attended and to see several new faces. Thanks Andy Wattam for coming all the way down from Canberra to catch up!

After an extended BBQ lunch we walked into the sanctuary and released Dwarf Galaxias into one wetland and Southern Pygmy into another.

The day was finished off with a mini auction which included some oddities from Cory Young, some plants donated by Rod Wubben and some rainbowfish donated by Glenn Briggs. Thank you to everyone who joined us - it was a relaxed and very enjoyable day!



Catching up and sneaking a look at the auction lots... Photo: Greg Martin.



Our BBQ attendees posing for a photo before releasing Dwarf Galaxias into Galaxiella Lagoon, seen behind them in the background. Photo: Greg Martin



Beautiful Galaxiella Lagoon once had Dwarf Galaxias. Now Dwarf Galaxias, descended from the original stock that lived here, have been reintroduced. Photo: Greg Martin.



Damian Walsh, Chris Lamin, Tim Curmi and a volunteer from Nangak Tamboree check out the Dwarf Galaxias bred at Middle Creek Farm from broodstock collected last year in the sanctuary. Photo: Greg Martin



Henry Albert releasing Dwarf Galaxias from the field tank. Photo: Greg Martin.



Damian DiLorio releasing the next lot of Dwarf Galaxias. Photo: Greg Martin.



The second wetland. This one was the release site for the Southern Pygmy Perch on the day. Photo: Greg Martin



Tim Curmi. NFA president, ANGFA committee member, determined doer and tireless advocate of native fish conservation and restocking efforts. Photo: Greg Martin.



Andy wattam and Chris Lamin catch up. Photo: Greg Martin.





Peter Gauci holding a field tank of Southern Pygmy Perch for Damian DiLorio to photograph. Glenn Briggs, Tom Jozinovic and Bill Buhagiar look on. Photo: Greg Martin



Peter Gauci releases the fish from the field tank. Photo: Greg Martin.



Tom Jozinovic releases the remaining fish. Photo: Greg Martin.

# Club meeting details and key contacts of ANGFA Vic

## Office Bearers 2023

<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 Coordinator:</b> Greg Martin	0407 094 313
<b>Field Trip Safety Officer:</b> Rodney Wubben	0409 890 866
<b>Membership Officer:</b> Rodney Wubben	0409 890 866
<b>General helper:</b> Paul Byham	

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 2023:

Friday 3rd February 2023  
Friday 14th April 2023 (a week later than normal)  
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**

Present

**Neil Armstrong, Glenn Briggs, Ken Smales and Tony Tucceri**

## Other fish groups in Victoria

**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