



Dylan White is our 4th October guest presenter with “Snobs Creek Hatchery: our 10 year plan for native fish recovery”



Upper left: the new VFA Conservation Hatchery at Snobs Creek. Lower left: Sam Fawke releasing hatchery-bred fingerlings. Photos from the VFA Conservation hatchery website. Right: Dylan White at the recent Wetland Warriors native fish forum at Winton Wetlands in Benalla, Vic. Photo: Greg Martin

Dylan has been with Victorian Fisheries Authority (VFA) since November 2019 after previously being at the Snobs Creek Hatchery 10 years earlier, and currently holds the position of Program Manager Snobs Creek.

Dylan has a bachelor's degree in fisheries management and aquaculture and has years of experience in various aquaculture and public aquarium settings. Dylan has a wealth of knowledge with the aquatic world and returned to Snobs Creek from SEALIFE Melbourne Aquarium where he managed many aquatic creatures including a 5m crocodile, weedy sea dragons and the critically endangered Spotted Handfish to name a few.

The \$2.7 Million conservation hatchery is part of the Victorian Government's work to combat the decline of Victoria's native plants and animals through the landmark 20-year Biodiversity plan, and the VFA will operate the hatchery alongside its existing production facilities at Snobs Creek, with funding provided by the Department

of Environment, Energy and Climate Action (DEECA), Victorian Environmental Water Holder and the Albanese Labor Government.

Equipped with state-of-the-art technology, the facility allows for monitoring and control of water and air temperature, light intensity and photoperiod, flow patterns, and automated feeding equipment. This gives us the flexibility and precision required to breed a wide range of species in need of a helping hand, from small-bodied native fish to mussels and crayfish. Some of the species they will be working on are:

- McDowall's Galaxias (*Galaxias mcdowalli*)
- Moroka Galaxias (*Galaxias* sp. nov. 'Moroka')
- Flathead Galaxias (*Galaxias rostratus*)
- Glenelg freshwater mussel (*Hyridella glenelgensis*)
- Murray Spiny Freshwater Crayfish (*Euastacus armatus*)
- South-Gippsland Spiny Crayfish (*Euastacus neodiversus*)
- Freshwater Blackfish species (*Gadopsis* spp.)
- Southern Purple-spotted Gudgeon (*Mogurnda adspersa*)

Contents

Our next club meeting presentation	1
President's report	2
Pictorial report from Convention 2024	3 -11
Field Trip Files: Moorabool River, 17 th - 18 th August 2024	12 - 17
Next field trip details	18
Club meeting details and key contacts	19

President's Report October 2024



Welcome to VICNews 137! At our August club meeting, Peter Gauci (our own Melbourne-based Blue-eye nut) gave a fabulous presentation on keeping and breeding Blue-eyes, which was so popular that we got him to do it again for our August 2024 ANGFA Clubs Zoom presentation.

On the weekend of the 17th and 18th August we ran an overnight field trip to the Moorabool River, northwest of Geelong. Whilst we didn't find a huge number of fish, we had a lovely weekend exploring and learning more about this interesting and often overlooked Victorian river. Thank you Sunny for doing the leg work in pre-organising this field trip.

This meeting, as we always do in October, we will run our annual AGM. As per our constitution, all Committee Members will stand down at the AGM and their positions will become vacant. This gives members the opportunity to elect to office whomever they feel is best suited for the position.

The Committee recognises that in order for ANGFA Vic to flourish, the continual regeneration of the ANGFA Vic Committee with new and enthusiastic members that represent the wider interest of the club is needed. If you would like to be involved with the Committee or have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact a current Committee member on the night.

An exciting piece of news since the last meeting is that our ANGFA Vic's General Research Permit (number RP 1559) has been approved by Fisheries. This enables us to now do more complete surveys using dip nets, Fyke Nets, Box Traps and Seine Nets.



Above: Coastal roadside wetlands on Pearl Point Track, Bemm River. Right: Dwarf Flathead Gudgeon from far east Gippsland. Photos: Greg Martin

Our **2024 ANGFA National Convention** was held over the weekend of the 20th - 21st of September, with field trips on the two days immediately following the convention. It was a fantastic event as promised, with Hans-Georg Evers setting the scene with a fantastic and charismatically delivered talk on his many collecting trips to West Papua. The speakers included Michael Hammer with Micah Borok (Micah presenting by remote via WhatsApp), Josh Lawler, Johannes Graf, Wim Heemskirk, Marten Salossa, Keith Martin, Glynn Aland, Nicole Smith, Lyle Squire, Nathan Waltham and Brendan Ebner! The field trips didn't disappoint either with warm sun, rainforest, colourful local fish and plenty of wildlife to be seen as well. There is a pictorial article on page 4, to give an overview of the convention - photos by Greg Martin.

Our next field trip is a big 4 day/3 night trip to far east Gippsland, over the Melbourne Cup long weekend in early November, to look at Ewing Morass and Dock Inlet. The following schedule has been proposed by David DeAngelis from Abzeco Applied Botany, Zoology and Ecology Consulting, who we will be joining on the trip, and it is a good one:

- **Saturday 2nd November**, 11am, meet at Middle Creek Conservation Hatchery in Briagolon for a tour of the facility and to look at some of the local creeks. Stay overnight in Stratford/Middle Creek Farm.
- **Sunday 3rd November**, leave Briagolon and head to Jungle Beach Caravan Park in Cape Conran. At 2pm split into two groups: Team 1 to head to Ewing Morass to set traps and Fyke nets in some of the wetlands overnight. Team 2 hike to Dock Inlet to set traps as well and camp overnight at the site.
- **Monday 4th November**, morning, Teams 1 and 2 check and retrieve traps. Team 2 hike out and meet up with everyone else at Jungle Beach Caravan Park. Reset traps in Ewings Morass for the night.
- **Tuesday 5th November**. Check and retrieve traps before heading home.

There will be lots of opportunities to check out the local creeks and spend plenty of time socialising around the camp fire etc. And if you don't want to be involved in the more remote sites, that's fine too. It is a splendid area and a great place to relax for a couple of days. There will be opportunities to do **Frogging with David DeAngelis**, and there are a lot of **Herps** to see as well!

As always, a big thank you to the ANGFA members that continue to attend our field trips - it is always great to get out into the natural world. Field tripping is fun!

Enjoy this edition and we'll see you at the next meeting on Friday 4th October, for a relaxed evening of learning, of fun, plenty of chat time and catching up with fellow fishos!

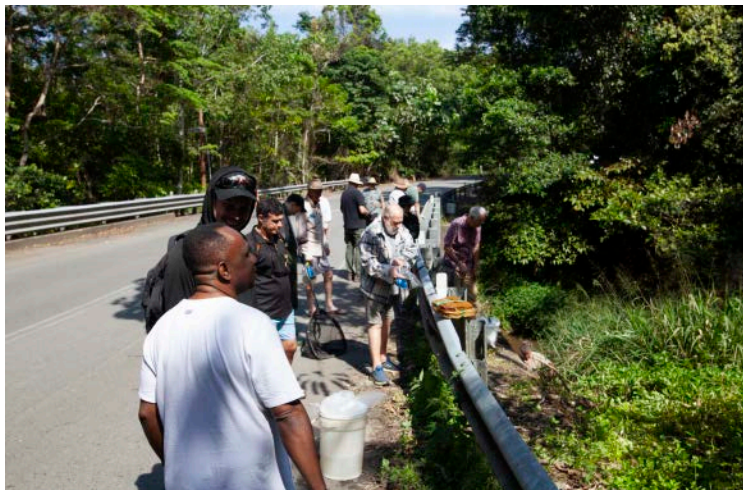


Pictorial report of the ANGFA National Convention 2024 Cairns





ANGFA Convention field trip to the Atherton Tablelands Jumrum Creek



ANGFA Convention field trip to the Atherton Tablelands Lake Eacham



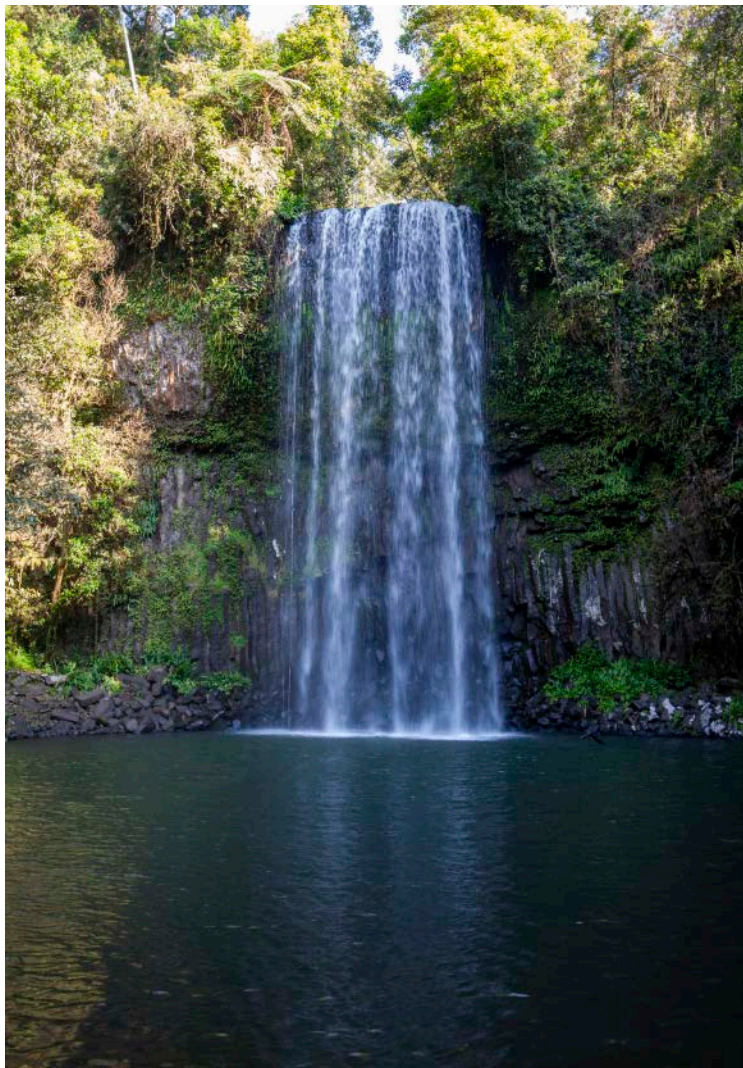
ANGFA Convention field trip to the Atherton Tablelands Williams creek, east branch



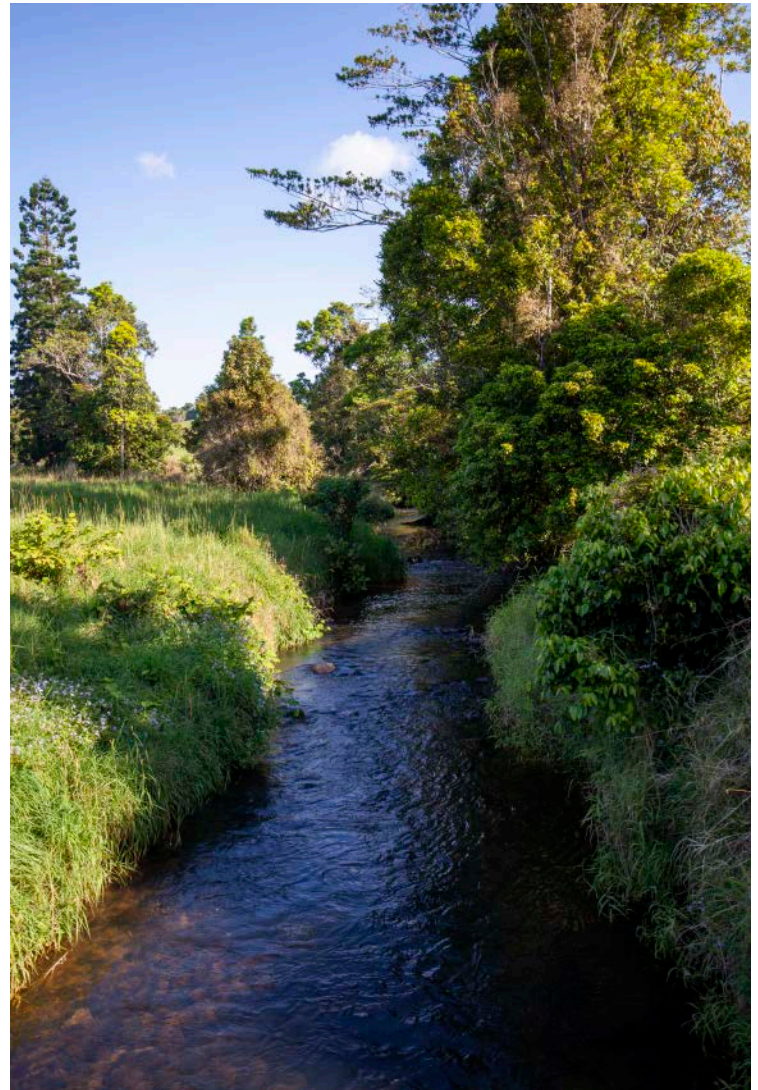
ANGFA Convention field trip to the Atherton Tablelands Ithaca River



ANGFA Convention field trip to the Atherton Tablelands Views from Malanda Rd and Millaa Millaa Falls



ANGFA Convention field trip to the Atherton Tablelands Maalan River





Field Trip Files: Moorabool River 17th and 18th August 2024



Left to right: Rod Wubben, Sunny Syme, Jake Van Dam (Estuaries and Environmental Water, Corangamite CMA), and Luke Daley. Photo: Greg Martin

Our August field trip, to look at a handful of sites on the Moorabool River, started north east of Meredith near the confluence of the west and east branches of the river.

The Moorabool River, begins in the Wombat State Forest as two branches east north east of Ballarat. The original wetlands and riparian woodlands of the Moorabools headwaters and upper catchment headwaters, were once dominated by Swamp Gums, Manna Gums and Blackwoods and a few tracts still remain. However, once it leaves this forested area the condition of the river, the riparian area and the overall catchment rapidly deteriorates. On its journey south the river runs through a very human-altered landscape: eroded sedimentary and fertile volcanic soils and across the flat western Basalt plain to its confluence with the Barwon River 160kms away. Our first two sites were in pasturelands.

Site 1 - Small weir on Dollys Creek Road. Dollys Creek Road is a small unmade road that winds its way up the river valley, used by locals and incidentally, is cut off in high water events as the river can rise a couple of meters over the bridge at the beginning of the road.

Here the water was very clear and there were large patches of submerged aquatic vegetation including Chara, Triglochin, Myriophyllum and Ranunculus. Streamside vegetation included Phragmites and a Sedge.

The native vegetation along the river is predominantly various wattles

and teatree and they provide a lot of shade over the water as the river is narrow here.

The predominant macroinvertebrates were stonefly larvae, indicating good water quality. Also present were various caddisfly larvae including Stick Caddis, Stone Caddis and 'Pillowcase' Caddis.



The hills around the start of Dollys Creek Road are quite denuded and we saw sheep close by the road. Photo: Greg Martin

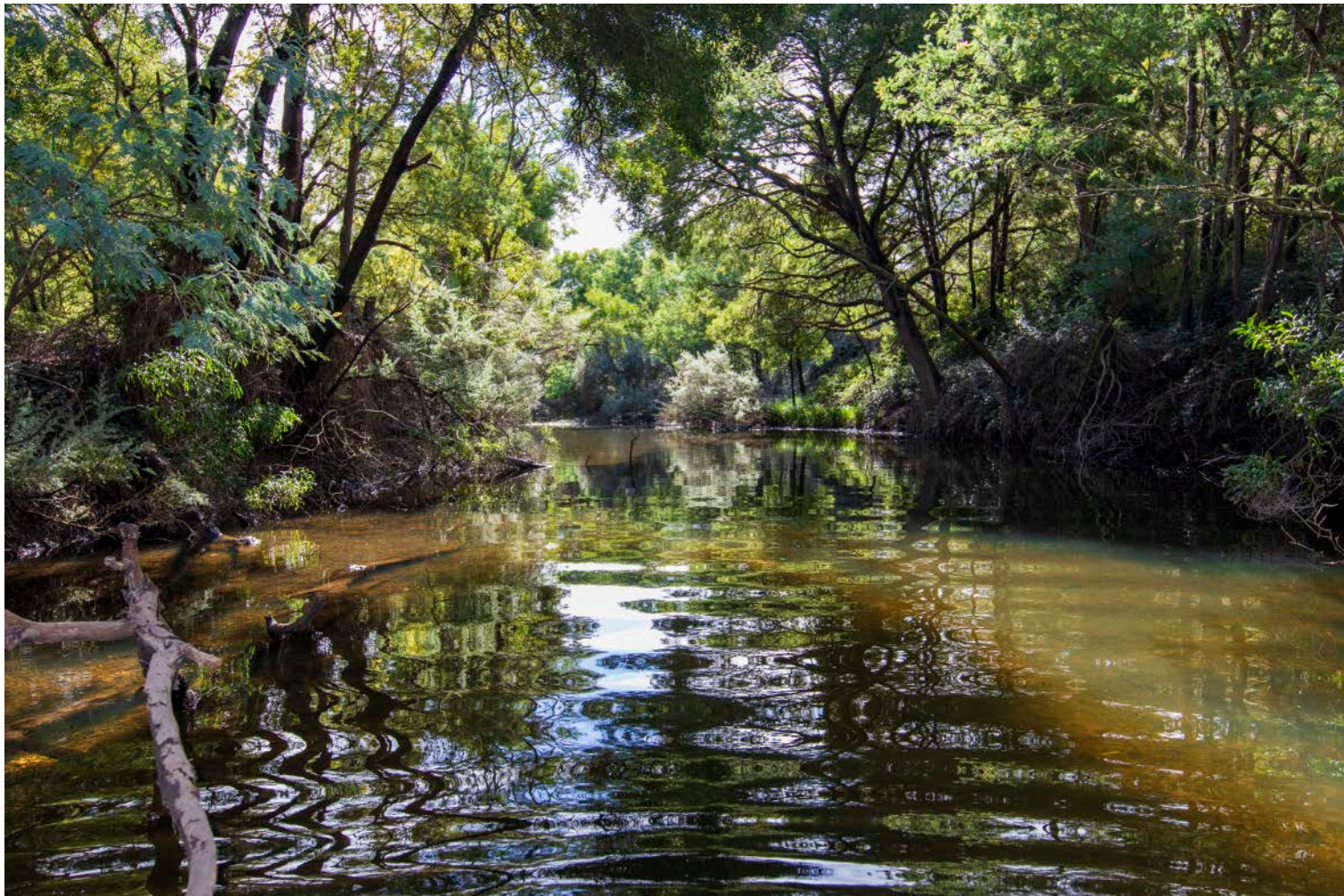


Overturning rock with a line of dip nets downstream, to see if we can flush out any fish or critters in the river. Photo: Rod Wubben

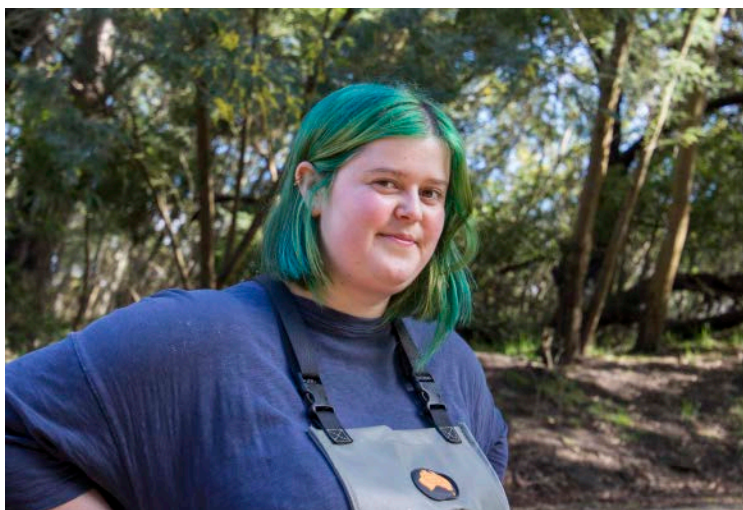
Using bait dip netting and bait traps we found a good number of unusually large Glass Shrimp (*Parataya*), some of which were beautifully coloured, a few *Gambusia* and one Tench (*Tinca tinca*).



Top left: Juvenile Tench. Top right: freshwater Pea Mussel. Bottom left: Stonefly larvae, Bottom right: Luke and Sunny carefully looking through the net. Photos: Greg Martin



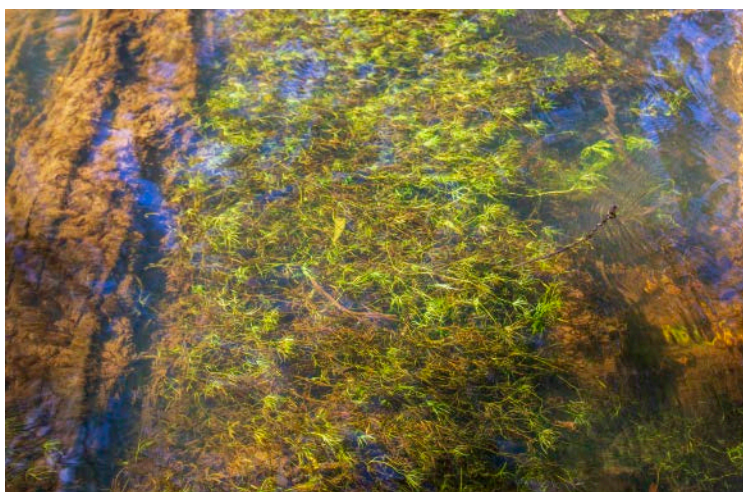
Looking upstream of the road crossing at Site 2. The river is a little wider here. Photos: Greg Martin



Our next stop was at Site 2, about 1 km back down Dollys Creek Road towards Ballan-Meridith Road. The road crossing here is a concrete causeway with a large diameter pipe running underneath. In a high water event, the causeway is completely covered, cutting off access to this part of Dollys Creek Road. The Moorabool River has an enormous number of significant barriers to fish.

Here, like the river had a little way upstream, there were good stands of Triglochis and Ranunculus.

As we left each site we set a few bait traps to be collected the following morning.



Above left: Sunny looking circumspect about her picture being taken. Above: Glenn and Jake netting at Site 2. Lower left: Rununculus growing very well here. Photos: Greg Martin



Above: Site 3, Sharps Road Crossing. Above: Happy field trippers. Below: Moorabool River looking upstream. At this location the river is once again flowing through beautiful natural forested countryside. Photos: Greg Martin.





Exploring at the Sharps Road crossing site. Photo at top right by Rod Wubber, all other photos by Greg Martin.



Sunny photographing this spectacular Flathead Gudgeon (below). Photos: Greg Martin



Our next Field Trip is: Cape Conran, surveying Ewings Morass (west of Marlo) and Dock Inlet (between Cape Conran and Bemm River) 2nd to 5th November 2024



Where: Meet at Middle Creek Native Fish Hatchery,
10 Garretts Lane Briagolong, Vic 3860.
GPS coordinates: -37.888453, 147.158800

Meeting at: 11.00 am on Saturday 2nd November.

Bring: waders, buckets, nets, hat, wet weather gear, cameras, field tank,
water bottle, snacks, camping equipment/overnight bag (if staying in a
cabin), food etc

Fishes: Dwarf Flat-headed Gudgeon, Common Galaxias, Flinders
Pygmy Perch, Empire Gudgeon, Cox's Gudgeon, Striped Gudgeon,
Congoli... who knows?

Note: This event is a 4 day field trip so we will be camping/staying in
accommodation.

**IF YOU INTEND TO JOIN US ON THIS TRIP, LET GREG KNOW
ASAP SO WE CAN DISCUSS ACCOMODATION OPTIONS
AHEAD OF TIME**

For more information: contact Greg Martin on 0407 094 313 or
gregmartinfishman@gmail.com.



Club meeting details and key contacts of ANGFA Vic

Office Bearers 2024

President: Greg Martin 0407 094 313
Treasurer: John Lenagan 0413 730 414
Secretary: Glenn Briggs 0408 771 544
Grant Applications and Permit Writer: Tim Curmi 0417 419 765
Field Trip Coordinator: Greg Martin 0407 094 313
Field Trip Safety Officer: Rodney Wubben 0409 890 866
Membership Officer: Rodney Wubben 0409 890 866
Committee members: Chris Lamin, Paul Byham, Gybe Forster, Matt McGee, Sunny Syme and Peter Gauci
VICNews: Greg Martin

Other fish groups in Victoria

Aquarium Society of Victoria Contact: Daryl Maddock (03) 9874 1850
Native Fish Australia Vic. Contact: Tim Curmi 0417 419 765

Victorian ANGFA National LIFE MEMBERS

Past

Ron Bowman, Barry Crockford and Tony Tucceri

Present

Neil Armstrong, Glenn Briggs and Ken Smales

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 2024:

Friday 4th October 2024 (Includes our AGM)
Friday 6th December 2024



Rainforest at Lake Eacham, Atherton Tablelands, north Qld. Photo: Greg Martin