



7 August 2015 Ken Walker (kwalker@museum.vic.gov.au) Museum Victoria. Edition 20.

Hi All – If you have an interest at all in Test Cricket just turn to BowerBird. There are much more entertaining and enjoyable things to do and see on BowerBird than watching the Australian cricket team be all out for a score of 60 and before lunch. I found some humour that the “extras”, which is when the bat does not make contact with the ball but the players can still run, was the top score with 14 runs. What a hoot. I have a New Zealand colleague, with whom I swap sporting dig emails from across the “ditch”, sent me an email overnight about the cricket score and warning me to get ready for another defeat when the Australian Wallabies play against the All Blacks New Zealand Rugby Union over the weekend. My reply was that I have decided to take up “Darts” which I believe requires sporting prowess and a sporting figure ... except for those darts players who can balance several jugs of beer on their stomach.

One of the BowerBird programmer’s, Hamish Crittenden, wife safely delivered their second child two days ago. Katrina and the new baby, Bea, are both well and Mabel has a new sister. Katrina had a shocking time with her first pregnancy being sick most of the time and occasionally hospitalised. As they say, thanks goodness child birth is done by the female of the species .. if it were up to us “mere males”, the species may not be here today.

Memory is a funny thing

This week, Martin Lagerwey posted a wonderful close up image of a mite on an Acacia flower. I knew I had seen a similar image but I also knew I had seen it quite some time ago.



So, I tried a combination of Google Image searches and before long I had found that “memory image” and the mite was again on Acacia. The “memory image” was on the combined 43rd Australian Entomological and Arachnological Societies 2012 Conference website and it had a name – “*Rainbowia*”.



3. *Rainbowia* sp. (spider mite) on *Acacia dealbata*. Adult erythraeid mites are predatory on small invertebrates and eggs, larvae are often parasitic on invertebrates (e.g. certain species of *Rainbowia* are parasitic on psyllids).

I wish I could remember more recent events and people's names with the same clarity!

Richness of the peer-reviewed identifications works so well on BoweBird

Gio Fitzpatrick posted some wonderful close up images of an ant in the genus *Monomorium*. This is a difficult genus to place to species. Gio placed it to the species *Monomorium rubriceps*



There are two closely allied species – *Monomorium rubriceps* and *M. kiliani*. Kate Sandiford went for *M. kiliani* and I loved the reasons she presented – these discussions are how we all can learn.

Kate commented: “I’m going for *M. kiliani* due to the shape of the post-petiole (second waisted segment) and the protruding central portion of the clypeus (front part of the head above the mandibles/jaws) visible in image 3. See specimens on the AntWiki species pages for the difference between these

features in *rubriceps* and *kiliani*; also American myrmecologist Alex Wild has photographed both species live at Diamond Creek on www.alexanderwild.com. According to Alan Andersen, *kiliani* is a winter forager and these ants are currently very busy in my backyard in Melbourne's inner north, out even in today's wet freeze. I've been tempting them with both sweet and fat baits, each readily taken but the latter preferred. I've also seen them bring small invertebrates such as live earwig hatchlings back to the nest.”



Photos by Gio Fitzpatrick.

Gio seems to like photographing small animals as seen by his posts this week of springtails – Collembola. Springtails are not something noticed by many people but if you venture into your compost bin or turn over almost any log in a moist environment, then you will find springtails. Usually, these are white and jump but many others take on a range of intriguing colours. Here are some of Gio's Collembola images from this week:

It is not uncommon to see literally thousands of grey and pink springtails floating on water. I asked Australia's Collembola expert, Dr Penny Greenslade, to comment and she said: "I think there are two families and three species present in these photos. Nothing new and quite normal for floaties on urban drains and puddles. Two are definitely exotics, I call them noxious weeds! The other may well be also but the taxonomist who described it believed it was introduced to South America from where it was originally described, from Australia. Of course from a photo I can confirm nothing except the families, Hypogastruridae and Brachystomellidae."



All of these springtails are approximately 1-2mm in body length.



Photos by Gio Fitzpatrick.

Things I have never seen before.

This image by Wilma McNabb is a beauty showing a longhorn beetle (*Agrianome spinicollis*) emerging from its pupal case.

During my final undergraduate year at Uni of Qld, I did several experiments involving the irradiation and sterilisation of Queensland Fruit fly pupae and I made the mistake of saying to my Professor “my fly pupae have hatched.” I can still hear him “yelling” in my ear: “Eggs hatch; Pupae emerge! Egg hatch; Pupae emerge!”. Funny how somethings you are taught, you never forget – ever!!



Photos by Wilma McNabb

Things I have never seen before.

I have never before seen a “Slater eating spider” (*Dysdera crocata*) actually eating a slater – but that’s what they do!

I showed these images to our crustacean curator who said: “That’s a pillbug not a slater. One could argue that a slater or woodlice is a species of *Porcellio*. This is *Armadillidium*. But I am not going to be insistent. “ Thanks Gary!



Photos by Gio Fitzpatrick

Birds of a feather, flock together

Dane Wimbush uploaded a series of wonderful images taken on Lady Elliot Island.

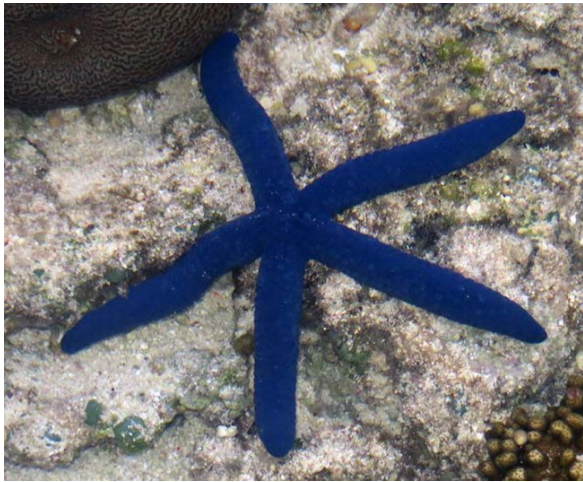
These two photos of the Eastern Reef Heron (*Egretta sacra*) had the comment: “Both the light phase & the dark phase were common on the lagoon, Lady Elliot Island.”



Red-tailed Tropicbird

Photos by Dane Wimbush

Dane also presented an amazing array of sea creatures from Lady Elliot Island:



Photos by Dane Wimbush



Photos by Dane Wimbush

I recommend a scroll and look at Dane's images:
<http://www.bowerbird.org.au/users/16485/sightings>

Erica Siegel posted this detailed image of the Leaf cutter bee - *Megachile Eutricharaea pictiventris* from the Brisbane, Qld region.



Photo by Erica Siegel

And Graeme Cocks posted this hilarious image with the record title: "White-tailed Rat by torchlight."

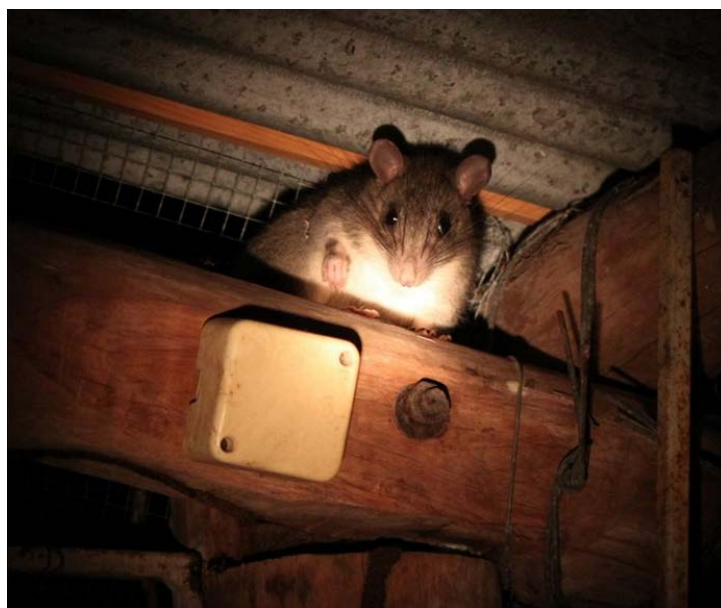
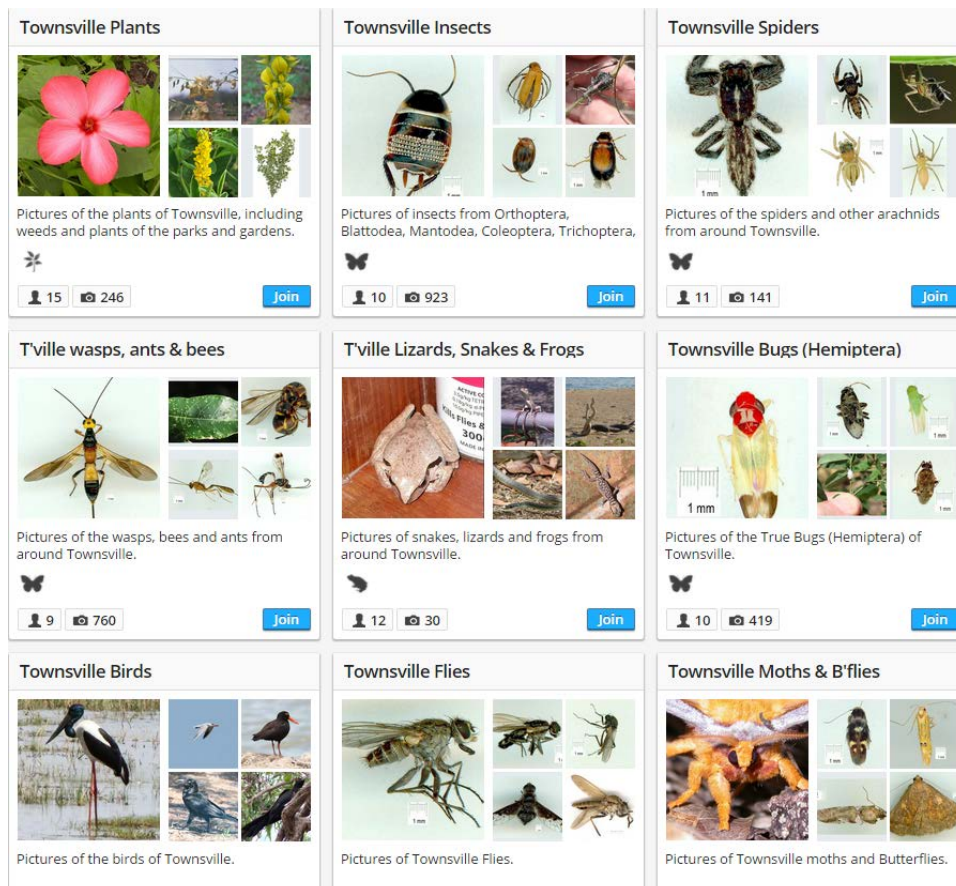


Photo by Graeme Cocks

Speaking of Graeme Cocks .. Ta Da!! Graeme is the first BowerBird member whose individual record uploads has exceeded the 5,000 record mark. If we had a BowerBird “Gold Elephant Stamp”, it would be against Graeme’s name.



Graeme lives in Townsville and he had created at least 9 BowerBird projects dedicated to the vertebrate and invertebrate faunas of Townsville. Thanks Graeme for your enthusiasm!



What's the difference between a spider and harvestman?

David Mules posted this interesting photo asking what kind of spider was it. Indeed, it is an Opiliones or Harvestman commonly found in damp forests.

The easy way to spot a harvestman is by the segmented abdomen. Apart from a few primitive spiders (Liphistiidae found in Southeast Asia, China, and Japan), no spider has a segmented abdomen.



Photo by David Mules.

The things scientists get all excited about.

During the week, Patrick Kavanagh posted an image of a bug. I recognised it as a lacebug (Family Tingidae) and sent it off to the Australian expert, Dr Gerry Cassis at the University of Sydney.

Almost immediately I had a reply from Gerry telling me that he and a colleague were currently revising this genus of lacebug (*Nethersia*) and could be please use Patrick's images in his publication. With permission from Patrick, I got Patrick and Gerry in contact and images have been exchanged! Another citizen science and professional triumph for BowerBird.



Photo by Patrick Kavanagh

Fungal fixes for the week.



Photos by Torbjorn von StrokirchJapan



Photos by Torbjorn von StrokirchJapan



Photos by Reiner Richter



Photos by Matt Campbell



Photos by Steve Young



Photos by Tamara Leitch

Tamara also photographed an amazing “Hairy House Centipede” - Chilopoda: Scutiggeromorpha: *Allothereua maculata*



Photos by Tamara Leitch

Like to learn a new word?

How about “brumation”!

Brumation is a term used for the hibernation-like state that cold-blooded animals use during very cold weather.

Tamara photographed this Jacky Lizard (*Amphibolurus muricatus*) on 1 August 2015, just south of Bairnsdale, Vic in the state of “brumation”.

Tamara commented: “Fast asleep under a sheet of corrugated iron in a patch of remnant red gum woodland.”



Photos by Tamara Leitch

Just for fun!



More of Mark Berkery's photography. Photos and copyright.

As always from BowerBird .. that's your lot for this week.

Haveagoodweekend all Happy photographing ...

Cheers – Ken

(If you wish to leave this email list, please contact me directly at kwalker@museum.vic.gov.au – else share with your friends)