

# The Ballarat Naturalist

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## *Postcard From Isolation: The La Gerche Trail, Creswick*

John La Gerche was a forester and bailiff who between 1882 and 1914 conducted many experimental plantings of introduced trees especially conifers to test their acclimatisation potential. At the same time, as a bailiff, he policed the area where illegal timber-cutting occurred. He was interested in restoring the forests degraded by gold mining and associated activities.

The 2Km trail was developed through part of the area he planted and informative signs have been placed along the way to tell the story.

Ballarat Field Naturalists have helped with species labels attached to notable trees.

This carving of La Gerche was created in 2014 from a Coast Redwood *Sequoia sempervirens* which grew in this position.

It pays to walk around the trail after good rain in autumn and winter as a variety of fungi grows there. Recently, I escaped into the bush, camera in hand to see what might be found.





Throughout the area, among various species of pines and oaks the Fly Agaric *Amanita muscaria* is common and can be seen in various stages of development from just emerging from the soil disguised by a carpet of pine needles, to a bright red specimen which then fades to pale orange and flattens out







*Pycnoporus coccineus*



*Russula persanguinea*



Slippery Jack

*Suillus luteus*



Unknown

I am more than happy to receive corrections and suggestions for these two 'unknowns'!



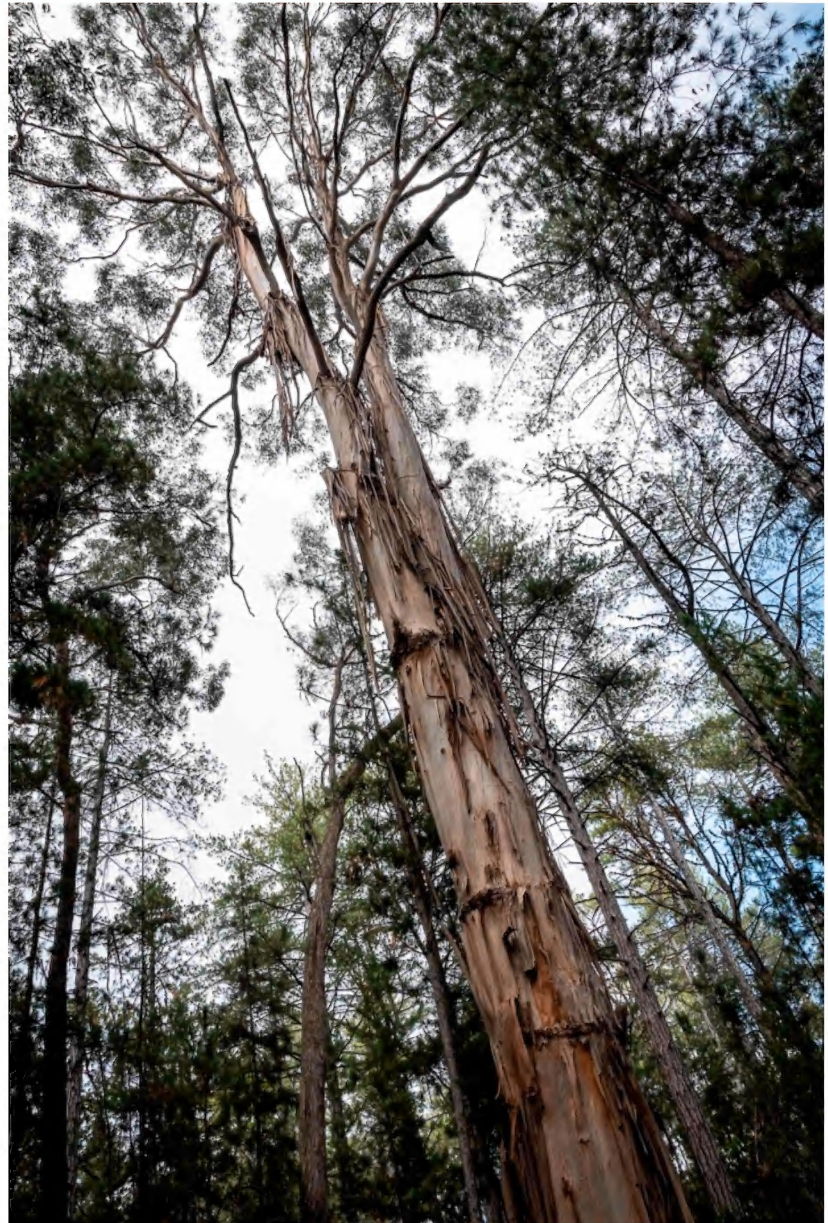
Unknown





Sawpit Gully, English Oaks, autumn

Tasmanian Blue Gum -  
one of the  
specimen trees we  
labelled.



*Carol Hall*



## **The Rat Nats—Juniors Group**

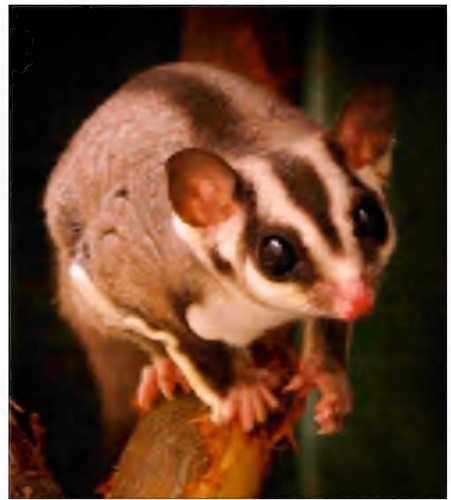
Once again, our Juniors have not been able to get together physically and enjoy the bush—and each other’s company. While we continue to share photos and information via our Facebook page, it is not quite the same.

We have had some interest from the Scouts in Dereel who would like to join us next time we’re at Stringybark and we’d love to be able to hold the camp we have planned for September.

Hopefully, the COVID19 restrictions will be relaxed very soon and we can gather together again - as nature intended. In the meantime, here are a couple of limericks to enjoy.

*How about making your own poems and sending them in!!*

*There once was a young Sugar Glider  
Who needed a flashlight to guide her;  
She swallowed it down  
And wriggled around  
‘Til the light shone out from inside her*



*There once was a young White-winged Chough  
Who complained that life was too tough,  
“I’ve been chased by a wedgie  
And now I’m so edgy...  
Well really, I’ve had quite enough!”*





## Field Reports

Peter and Claire Dalman write: On May 5th our daughter removed her summer marine carpet from her dam floor, thus discovering many yabbies and two spiders. She sent photos of these to Lynne Kelly of Castlemaine to identify. Lynne says they are Dolomedes genus, also known as fishing spiders, raft spiders, dock spiders or wharf spiders which seems appropriate considering where they were found. For more information: <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dolomedes>



Mother's Day reminded me to show and tell this maternal insect. It's a sawfly, *Pseudoperga* sp. And I'm told that mum will stay with her young at all costs. This photo was taken on 25/4/2020 and checking on them after a wild storm and extended downpour a week later,



they were still there - on the same leaf. A few days later, they were still there but running out of leaf. Checking today (8/5/2020), their original leaf home is gone and hopefully the family have moved on and found a safer spot, away from prying naturalists and hungry birds.

*Bill Elder*



## New Plant Record for Flax Mill Swamp Wildlife Reserve?

I found this plant recently whilst exploring Flax Mill Swamp, east of Mullawallah Wetland. I sent photos to Neville Walsh at the National Herbarium and, based on my photos, he supports my identification. It is *Senecio runcinifolius* (see below) which has distinctive runcinate leaves (see *Name That Flower* (Clarke and Lee, revised edition, 2019) - for a drawing fig. 18 on p.51).

I have also let Alex S. at Parks Victoria know that I have found it.



Neville says the nearest recorded location for this plant is Lake Goldsmith near Beaufort. I intend to enter this onto the VBA so it is available for planning decisions etc.

*Andy Arnold*

*Margaret Rich* has been surprised at the number of fungi on Mt Buninyong at the moment. (It is proving to be a bumper season for fungi just about everywhere.)

She recommends the South Walk of Mt Buninyong. A recent visit yielded Earth Stars and many other common and rarely seen fungi.



For more information on the South Walk, plus the Crater Circuit and other walks see:

<http://walks.buninyong.vic.au/>



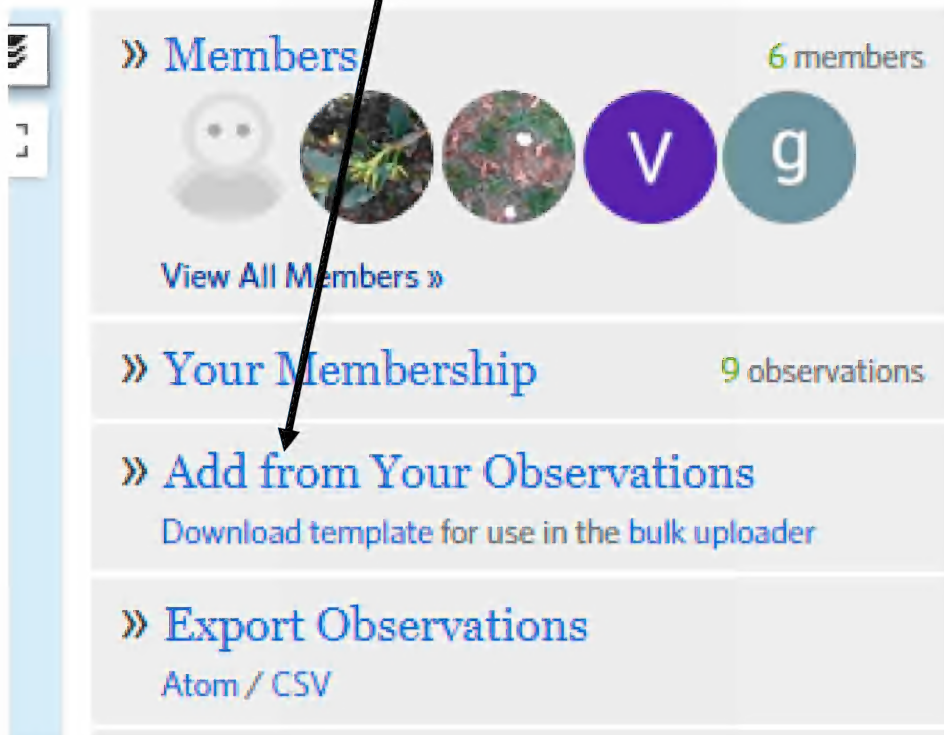
## How to do iNaturalist! (part 4)

### Bulk entry of existing records

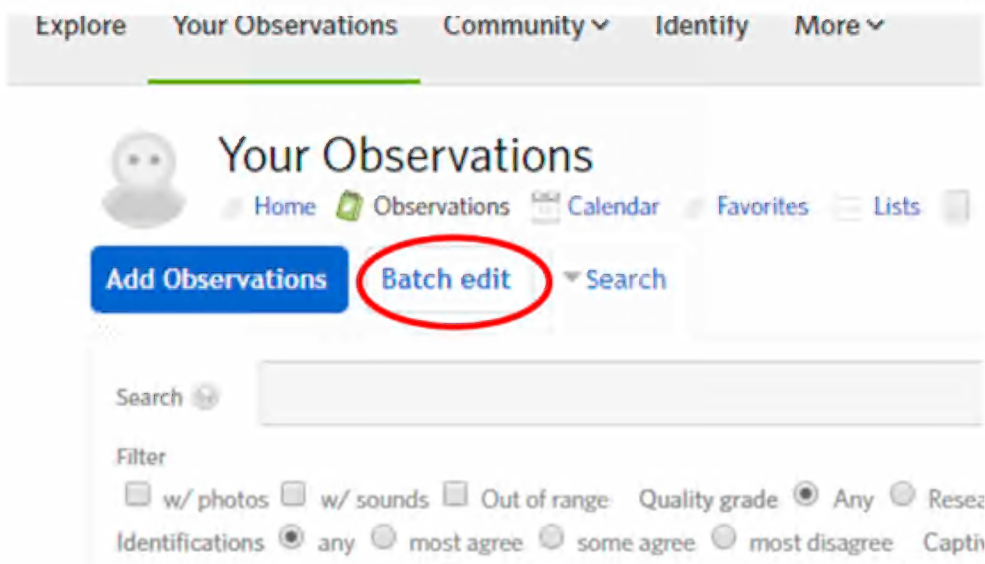
Step 1. First, log in to iNaturalist using your username and password.

Step 2. Go to the project you want to add observations to (from the Dashboard, select “Projects”).

Click on “Add from Your Observations” - on the right hand side, just under the photo banner. (You must be logged in in order to see this)






Step 3. Click on “Batch Edit”. This will make your observations accessible so you can select those you wish to include in the project.

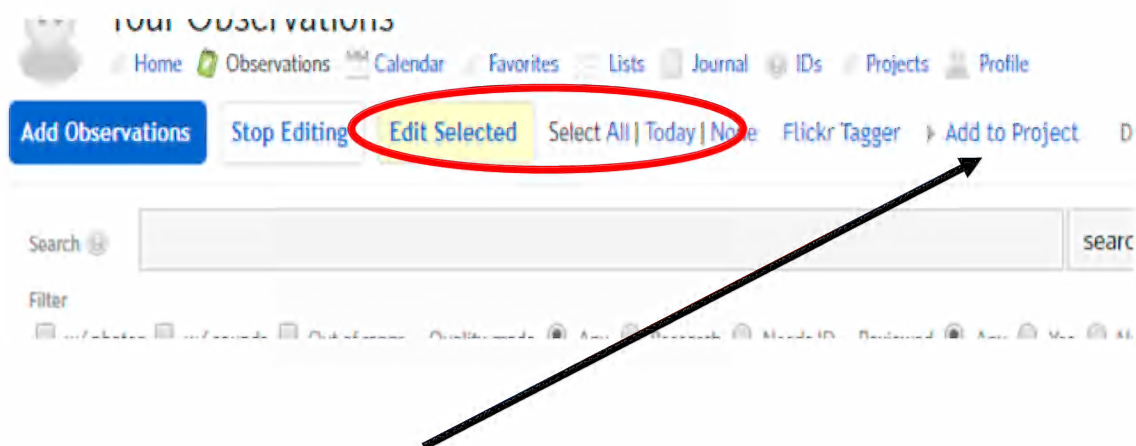




Step 4. Select the observations you want to upload to the project (click in the box to the left of the entry and a tick will appear to show it is selected).

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>Common Wedge-Pea</b> <i>Gompholobium huegelii</i>	November 27, 2018 08:14 AM AEDT	6 5 3 (
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>Small St John's Wort</b> <i>Hypericum gramineum</i>	November 27, 2018 08:54 AM AEDT	6 5 3 (
<input type="checkbox"/>		<b>Murnong</b> <i>Microseris lanceolata</i>	November 17, 2018 10:39 AM AEDT	6 5 3 (
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<b>Tall Sundew</b> <i>Drosera auriculata</i>	October 3, 2015 08:15 AM AEST	6 5 3 (
<input type="checkbox"/>		<b>Spotted Sun-Orchid</b> <i>Thelymitra ixioides</i>	October 30, 2018 10:58 AM AEDT	6 5 3 (

You can tick to select as above, or select **All** or **Today...**



Step 5. Click on “Add to Project” to start the process. The system will link the selected observations to the Project.



(from p. 9)

Don't worry if you try to upload a record that's already in the Project – you will receive an error message...

There may be other reasons why a record will not be added including the record not matching certain criteria set up by the manager of the Project. In this case it is best to send a message to the Project owner/administrator and ask about matching your record to their criteria.

the following reasons: Observation already added to this project

The following observations could not be added to [FNCB iNaturalist](#)



[Pterolocera amplicornis](#) from 61 Skipper Rd, Scarsdale VIC 3351, Australia on March 26, 2020 at 07:10 AM by [billeider](#)  
Observation already added to this project

Now you can add lots of records at once and make the job of adding observations so much easier and quicker.

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## Field Reports

*Val Hocking* reports “I have been hearing a frog regularly calling in her yard in Ballarat East over the last couple of months. He moves around. There is no water near here. Mostly he calls in early morning or evening, but also when raining. I think he is a Common Froglet as his call is “crick crick crick” and I sometimes wonder if he is a cricket/cicada by the call. I can't track him down as the call is intermittent.”.



Common Froglet *Crinia signifera*

Steve Walker



## Field Reports

In a 30 minute circuit of La Gerche Trail in mid-May we saw no less than 45 other visitors.

This included a 10 person Fungi club photographing fungi everywhere, and two groups gathering mushrooms.

Photo below shows one of our signs on the ground. It was attached to a tree - *E. dives* that had fallen across the path. (An entirely appropriate name really! Ed.)



Broad-leaved  
Peppermint  
*Eucalyptus  
dives* fallen  
across La  
Gerche Trail

*John Petheram*



## Operational Update

The Club will resume regular meetings and excursions as soon as it is safe to do so. We are limited at the moment by ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, but we know that these will be progressively lifted as time goes on.

The Committee continues to meet using phone and various computer technologies (email and Zoom) to stay in touch and deal with the regular business of the Club.

The Rat Nats group continues to share our experiences of nature via Facebook.

There are electronic presentations being made for your education and enjoyment—contact Bill for more details on how to access these.

Elspeth continues to manage the website and blog to keep members informed and engaged, as does this journal/newsletter

If you can think of other ways to share with others, let us know and we will make it happen!

### *Quote of the month*

At a recent committee meeting,  
one member was heard to ask, in all seriousness,  
“At Woorookarung, can you remember where the Dementia Trail is?”

### Committee

President	Bill Elder
Vice Pres	Margaret Rich
Secretary	Emily Noble
Treasurer	Kathy Elder
	Andy Arnold
	John Gregurke
	Les Hanrahan
	Val Hocking
	Graeme Lunt
	John Petheram

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Treasurer Kathy Elder

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**Meetings** and Excursions are cancelled until further notice owing to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19

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