

NEWS FROM THE ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

Ecological Society of Australia's report to the New Zealand Ecological Society

November/December 2005

Hi everyone, this will be a brief report due to the hectic pre-conference running around experienced by all us ESA 2005 conference goers. We are also excited about the two upcoming joint conferences with NZES firstly in Wellington (my home town) next year, and then INTERCOL in Brisbane in 2009.

Firstly, for all you myrmecologists: Don Driscoll and lab (Flinders University, South Australia) have been having some trouble with ants, particularly large meat ants (*Iridomyrmex purpureus*) in pit fall traps. The ants set up foraging columns and carry off captured animals. Surface insecticide was partially successful and Teflon in a liquid suspension has prevented some foraging columns, although that isn't so effective for meat ants. The next step is to try an insecticidal dusting powder. If any NZES members have any experience with preventing ants from foraging in pitfalls or any ideas about this, please contact Don at Don.Driscoll@flinders.edu.au.

Some of you may know the Corroboree frog, *Pseudophryne pengillei*, an endemic frog which migrates between subalpine snow-gum woodlands and sphagnum bog habitats in alpine NSW/ACT (Australian Capital Territory). Two years ago the ACT government began a captive breeding program for the frogs which has been very successful, over 1000 frogs are currently in the captive colony. This is estimated to be more than the total number in the wild. The frogs are due to be released in late 2006/early 2007, and will be monitored to determine the programs success.

The Australian Bird Study Association will hold its AGM and Science day on Saturday 25 March 2006 in Canberra. The theme of the Science day is "Raptors - Nocturnal and Diurnal". Visitors from NZ who are in or close to Canberra late March would be welcomed, details will be advertised on the Association's web page (www.absa.asn.au/) closer to the time. For more details contact Dr A.O. Nicholls nick.nicholls@csiro.au.

The ESA produces two peer-reviewed journals, Austral Ecology (8 volumes per year) and Ecological Management and Restoration (3 volumes per year). Austral Ecology needs no introduction as the older and more well known of the society's journals. Topics covered include ecological and theoretical studies in terrestrial, marine and freshwater systems in all areas of the southern hemisphere. The newer addition to the AES journal family is Ecological Management and Restoration (EMR) which has the goal of bridging the

gap between ecologists and practitioners. EMR is innovative in that it addresses the need among landholders for information about the science and practice of ecosystem restoration and management. In December's edition there are papers from such diverse topics as freshwater protected areas, fertility control in Koalas, effects of paddock tree loss on cockatoos and recovery of eroding peat surfaces. There is an upcoming special volume on vegetation condition assessment, so keep an eye on the journal contents.

Once more that's the end of this edition. More details of the ESA, its journals and its members can be found on our website, www.ecolsoc.org.au or by emailing me on rsinclair@bio.mq.edu.au. Cheers!

Robyn Sinclair

Robyn is a New Zealander currently living across the Tasman. She is completing her Masters with Lesley Hughes at Macquarie University in Sydney, working on the evolutionary ecology of leaf mining insects www.ecolsoc.org.au/What%20we%20do/Prizes/documents/RobynSinclairPoster.pdf

ECOLOGY STUCK ON THE WEB

4: Photo sharing the Flickr way

In my first Ecology Stuck on the Web, I briefly introduced the wonders of using images.google.com to make plant species look like more than Latin binomials and Flora jargon. Type in a species name and Google will instantly scour the web to show you available photos of your species. (Disclaimer disclaimer disclaimer: check out the credentials of the source website before trusting a species identification on the web.)

With photo search engines like images.google.com, we could all bounce along being happy parasites sucking off other people's hard work. We could keep our own digital photos and scans safely locked away in our hard drives and intranets, too mind-bogglingly bamboozled by how we might put them onto a website to share them with others.

But be bamboozled no longer, my friends! There is now an easy and elegant and, gasp, *free*, way to share your photos with the world, and its name is Flickr (www.flickr.com). To quote their website, "Flickr is the WD-40 that makes it easy to get photos from one person to another in whatever way they want."

Like the Google Scholar service I introduced last issue, Flickr is a project in development that is online in Beta form. But that's OK because it works spectacularly well already. And Flickr is no basement hobby project thrown together by a couple of Canadians. It is already being used by over a million people, contains almost 40 million photos, and was recently acquired by Yahoo (and it was developed by a couple of really clever Canadians and their small company).

Flickr is fantastic for all sorts of reasons. It is more than easy, elegant, and free. It allows you (and your friends) to attach and edit keywords (called “tags”) to photos. These tags are all searchable. You can add public comments to other people’s photos (gushing about how cute a particular baby furry animal is or providing a latin binomial for said furry animal). You can join and create groups to accumulate photos on a certain topic (e.g., www.flickr.com/groups/canterburynature/). And you can make your Flickr photos show up on your Blog. (A blog is short for a weblog) a good example of an effective blog is frogblog, at blog.greens.org.nz/.)

Signing up for a free account at Flickr allows you to upload up to 20 MB of photos each month to the Flickr website. You can download a snazzy piece of software from Flickr (also for free) that allows you to resize and label photos and upload them to the Flickr website. Really simply. For 20 MB, you can load about 30 of your favourite pictures onto Flickr (or more if you really shrink them). The three major photo formats (JPG, PNG, and GIF) are all cheerfully accepted. (And for those readers younger than me, note that you can also apparently upload photos and browse Flickr photos with your fancy pants camera cellphone.)

Your photos end up being displayed on a Flickr webpage of your own, where your latest 200 photos will be displayed (you can see mine at www.flickr.com/photos/mollivan_jon/). If you’ve loaded up more than 200 photos, the old ones will still show up in searches and on group pages, they just won’t be displayed on your Flickr webpage. You can also organise your photos in up to three albums (“sets”). Flickr commits to storing your photos forever at a maximum size of 1024 pixels across (pretty big). If you choose to cough up US\$25 a year, Flickr will store all photos at their original size up to 10 MB each, as well as allows you to upload 1GB of photos a month, display all your photos ever (without ads), and make as many sets as you like. And yes, Flickr says there will always be a free service.

But what if people, complete strangers at that, run off and use your photos? Gasp! Well, that’s really the whole point. But if you want to restrict access to your Flickr photos, you can. You can restrict access to everyone but yourself and go on being a happy parasite. You can also restrict access to just a specified group of Flickr users. Also, uploaded photos are copyright to you by default meaning that nobody can legally use your photos without first gaining your permission.

But hey, this is supposed to be about sharing. What you can also do with your Flickr images is assign one of several Creative Commons licenses (creativecommons.org). All my uploaded photos are set to license number 2. This allows people to “copy, distribute, display, and perform the work” and “to make derivative works” so long as my name is always given and the use is non-

commercial. Any commercial use of my photos still legally requires my prior permission.

One of the neat ways of sharing and collating photos is through Flickr’s Groups. For example, there is a “New Zealand Natives” group (www.flickr.com/groups/nznatives/) and now a “New Zealand Naturalised” group (www.flickr.com/groups/nznaturalised/) for photos of wild species in New Zealand. Anyone can join these groups and add their photos to them. Anyone at all can browse these photos and use them (copyright dependent). There are lots of groups available, including more useful subjects like “Doom Penguins” (photographic evidence that “penguins are the rulers of the Earth”) and “Creepy Rabbits” (photos supporting the proposition that “rabbits can be creepy”).

All these features (and many more) make Flickr a great new way of sharing your digital photos and scans with the world. Flickr tags also make for a more targeted and reliable way of finding photos of a particular subject (e.g., species) than Google. Flickr is just beginning to fill with New Zealand ecology photos but the potential is enormous. Go forth and flickr!

Jon Sullivan
Lincoln University
webmaster@nzes.org.nz

FUSIONZ

The Royal Society of New Zealand has launched its job search service, Fusionz (<http://fusionz.rsnz.org>). Fusionz advertises positions in science and technology organisations or for scientific/ technical jobs within other organisations, across New Zealand.

For job seekers: The past two months have seen adverts from a wide variety of organisations—five of New Zealand’s eight universities, eight of the nine Crown Research Institutes and several private research institutes, public companies and government agencies. See <http://fusionz.rsnz.org/> to browse all listings or search for jobs within a specific geographical or scientific area.

For job advertisers: With 363 Fellows, 1500+ members, 3000 subscribers to our weekly newsletter (which includes updates and the week’s new job listings), and 20,000 scientists and technologists represented by our 60 constituent organisations, the Royal Society offers targeted marketing of your job vacancies. Advertising jobs is easy—simply click on ‘Add a job’ and fill in the details—the vacancy is posted up immediately. The cost is \$50 per advert but we will be happy to offer a discounted flat rate that allows organisations to post up as many vacancies as they have for a set period (contact: nisha.basson@rsnz.org).