

YONGERGNOW AUSTRALIAN MALLEEFOWL CENTRE NEWSLETTER

May 2010
Edited by Vicky Bilney

YONGERGNOW VISION STATEMENT COMMUNITY, CULTURE, CONSERVATION

“For Yongergnow as a community owned and driven interpretive ecotourism centre to be recognized as a centre of excellence for environmental awareness and education, with special focus on the mallee bush and its endangered flagship species, the Malleefowl.”

NEW FACE AT YONGERGNOW

Biologist Vicky Bilney has been confirmed in her role as the new Yongergnow Administrator.

Vicky is a self-described bird-nut with a volunteering history for Birds Australia WA, Bush Heritage Australia and the Eyre Bird Observatory. She has a degree in biology and is an experienced ecotourism manager.



Top: Volunteers Jane Campbell, Judy O'Neill and Jessica van der Waag marking and collecting Malleefowl eggs. The pink eggs fit snugly into stubby holders, which help maintain temperature and ensure cushioning during transport.

Bottom: Yongergnow's first chick Happy newly hatched in January (insert) and three months old (April).
Photos: Vicky Bilney

YONGERGNOW
AUSTRALIAN MALLEEFOWL CENTRE
ABN 49 489 859 404

YONGERGNOW CONTACT DETAILS

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OPENING HOURS

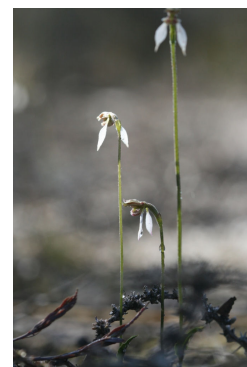
Mon, Wed, Thu 9am to 4pm
Sat, Sun 10am to 4pm

CLOSED

Tue, Fri, Christmas, New Year's Day
GROUP BOOKINGS WELCOME



Right: Bunny Orchids (4/10). **Above:** A rare find! Female trapdoor spider. Photos: Vicky Bilney



EXCITING START TO 2010

In January 2010, the beginning of the International Year of Biodiversity coincided with the beginning of a new era at Yongergnow.

The Department for Environment and Conservation (DEC) issued a permit to collect eight Malleefowl eggs from mounds in the wild. Equipped with data of active mounds and a GPS kindly supplied by the Malleefowl Preservation Group, two expeditions to collect Malleefowl eggs were led by biologists Jessica van der Waag and Vicky Bilney, respectively.

Supervised by experienced volunteer Jane Campbell (who helps raise chicks for Birds Australia's Carnaby's Black-cockatoo Recovery Project), the collected eggs were transferred into a custom made Malleefowl incubator. After hatching at approximately weekly intervals, the chicks were moved to custom made chick pens at Yongergnow.

Yongergnow is very happy to have seven chicks out of eight eggs, as in the wild, the survival rate of Malleefowl chicks is only one to two per cent.

Yongergnow will keep four of the chicks and DEC will release the other three in a predator-controlled environment.

The chance to see Malleefowl chicks in the wild is remote. Judy O'Neill, co-owner of a private Malleefowl reserve, says that she has never seen chicks in the wild while walking in the bush.

Staff, board and volunteers at Yongergnow invite you to use the unique opportunity to see these rare and endangered Malleefowl chicks.

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EXCITING PROSPECTS FOR YONGERGNOW'S MALLEEFOWL AND THEIR VISITORS

The Yongergnow Board has just given green light for an exciting extension of the centre's facilities. Funding will be sought to build a second aviary to be able to keep two pairs of adult Malleefowl. The proposed new aviary will be smaller than the existing one, but perfectly suitable for a breeding pair.

Malleefowl are very territorial birds. Pairs cannot be kept in one enclosure together as males tend to fight.

Due to popular demand, the second phase of the project will see the large aviary turned into a walk-in aviary. This will provide visitors with the opportunity to get close and personal with our Malleefowl - on the birds' terms!

Yongergnow has kindly been offered support by the Shire of Lake Grace, and Yongergnow Board and staff hope that the Shire of Lake Grace will be happy to assist with construction for the walk-in aviary.

NEWS FROM THE TELECENTRE

Most of you will know that the Ongerup Telecentre is co-located with Yongergnow Australian Malleefowl Centre.

The Telecentre Network is currently undergoing rebranding and will be known as Community Resource Centre Network. The Ongerup District Telecentre will turn into the Yongergnow - Ongerup Community Resource Centre. The Telecentre has access to generous funding through Telecentre Project Funds, the Department for Regions and Land and Royalties for Regions. These grants are obviously used for Telecentre purposes, aims and objectives only, but Yongergnow indirectly shares the outcome of successful applications. The Yongergnow Administrator would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the Ongerup Telecentre, the Department for Regions and Land and Royalties for Regions.

THANK YOU!

No newsletter about Yongergnow would be complete without a heart-felt thank you to all the volunteers who so tirelessly contribute to the day to day running of this spectacular centre. Thank you, dear vollies, for keeping Yongergnow ticking, and thank you, dear Mallee Donors, for making it possible with your generous contributions.

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EVENTS

The **Biodiversity Dinner** (6th March) celebrating the International Year of Biodiversity was a great success. Yongergnow Board and staff are very grateful that outstanding ecologist Angela Sanders (Bush Heritage) was happy to give a talk on biodiversity in exchange for dinner and a bed for the night.

On 19th March, Yongergnow and the Ongerup Telecentre co-hosted a **French Night** to celebrate the second (!) TAFE French course held at the Ongerup Telecentre.

A **Mallee Arts Day** is planned for August for regional schools and we look forward to inviting you to a **Night under the Stars** in September.

WHO IS WHO ON THE YONGERGNOW BOARD?

Ken Pech (chairman, Shire council)
Len van der Waag (co-secretary, MPG)
Aaron Cook (co-secretary, Shire CEO)
Phil Burns (treasurer)
Tony Sands (ecotourism)
Allan Faulkner (maintenance)
Janet Savage (Telecentre, Shire council)
Fred Duncan (aviary maintenance)
Shane Woods (indigenous matters)
Prof. Stephen Davies (ornithology)
Russell Pritchard (ex officio, GSDC)
Jessica van der Waag (ex officio, GSDC)
Vicky Bilney (ex officio, Yongergnow administrator)

MALLEE DONORS' CORNER

Thank you very much for supporting Yongergnow in its aim to raise environmental awareness and provide education about the Mallee and its precious Malleefowl and other creatures. Yongergnow board, staff and volunteers are more than grateful for your ongoing support and hope to see you soon at Yongergnow. Entrance fees are, of course, waived for you.

If you would like to renew your donation or become a Mallee Donor, please contact Vicky at Yongergnow.

You can become a

- **Mallee Patron (\$500 and over)**
- **Mallee Friend (\$250 to \$499)**
- **Mallee Donor (\$50 to \$249) or a**
- **Mallee Fowl Friend (\$15 to \$49)**

New Patrons, Friends and Donors will be mentioned in future newsletters. Yongergnow is happy to include logos of Patrons and Friends who are businesses in the newsletter.

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