

PUBLISHED BY THE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
ENTOMOLOGY

REGISTERED OFFICE:
9 BANKSIA COURT
WOODEND. VIC. 3442

PH: +61 3 7038 9452

ADMIN@ENTOINSTITUTE.ORG

NATIONAL INSTITUTE of ENTOMOLOGY NEWS



LINKS

- [HOME](#)
- [CURRENT COURSES](#)
- [FUTURE COURSES](#)
- [OTHER SERVICES](#)
- [LATEST NEWS](#)
- [N.I.O.E FORUMS](#)
- [NATIONAL INSECT EXPO](#)
- [CONTACT](#)

Inside this issue:

Cultures Ready for New Course. **2**

Wasp Discovery Upgrade.

National Insect Expo Getting Close. **3**

Dr Jenny Shield.

Database highlights interesting wasps. **4**

Insectarium of Victoria Nostalgia.

Institute Membership.

C.V.R.I.C Specimen Highlight. **5**

Russell G Wilkinson Collection.

Research News. Finding a Living Fossil.

N.I.O.E Services **6**

Advertising

Volume 1: Issue 4

SEPTEMBER 2025

FROM THE DIRECTOR



The September Edition of the National Institute of Entomology NEWS has arrived to keep our members informed as to what's been happening here at the institute this month.

Due to renovations and wet weather delays, some July/August Courses had to be postponed for a few weeks including the National Bug Club classes.

We concentrated in getting the main PC MAINFRAME Systems Room finished so that we could at least catch up with a huge backlog of emails, student registrations and of course..expo prep.

Thankfully, all seems to be back on track and we apologize for any inconvenience to students and members.

As mentioned in last months news, the search continues for a suitable permanent location and

this month, we made an offer to the Hume Council (Sunbury) to relocate the expo next year as a sweetener for token rental on one of their council owned sites.

Alas, it was not meant to be as the City of Hume is after an extremely high commercial rental return.. We got the feeling that they need money and lots of it. We will keep looking.

In other news, the Bug Club Students are getting very excited at preparing their displays and projects at this years expo for the very first time.

This will present to visiting parents at the expo the activities and scholarly work that your child could be part of in this group.

Only one month and 1 week to National Insect Expo 2025!! I just cannot believe that the event has come around already.

Until next month.

Dr Bert Candusio



There will be quite a few new exhibitors at this years expo along with some 'interesting' surprises for all the younger kids that visit in 2025.

National Junior Bug Club Students on Display

The students of the National Junior Bug Club are thrilled to be displaying their years work and special projects at this year National Insect Expo.

Some students will be travelling all the way down from Queensland along with their parents in order to set-up their individual work displays on the Thursday evening ready for the public opening for the next 3 days of the

event.

Each student has been diligently working through various entomology subjects during 2025 and all are looking forward to displaying their works.

Lets all help support our future entomologists.



Invertebrate Soil Cultures Ready for New Course

Back in March when the weather was more forgiving, some of our volunteers went out searching for a variety of soil dwelling insects and other related invertebrates for culturing.

Nematodes, Mites, PsuedoScorpions, Millipedes and Collembolan Springtails were brought back to the centre for culturing.

These will be used for a new upcoming course—SOIL MICROFAUNA. This exciting Course will be covering many interesting topics over a two week period such as identification of common soil invertebrates,

nutrient recycling, healthy soil structure and invertebrate conservation methods.

The goal is to offer students an interesting insight into the functioning of soil invertebrate populations and their ability to create healthy soil structure.

Our cultures will be used in order to present living specimens under microscopic video at high magnification so that these animals may be observed and discussed in real time during course lectures.

One of the more interesting

specimens that will be featured are the Geophilidae Centipedes or soil centipedes.

Geophilids are ferocious predators of many soil dwelling invertebrates and are the lions of the soil.



Some of the samples currently in culture.

**Top: Geophilid Centipede
Bottom: Collembolan Springtail.**

From the Institute Forum

High school students from Queensland have discovered a new species of wasp while participating in a nationwide citizen science program. The wasp was collected via a malaise trap, before being sent to the Canadian Centre for Biodiversity for identification.

There, it was discovered to be a previously unknown species of parasitic wasp.

The students responsible for its collection paid tribute to their school when choosing its name, *Cotesia ginginensis*.

nensis.

The story highlights the importance of citizen science for invertebrate discoveries Karyn Goodman, head of science at Gin Gin State High School, said it had been an anxious but exciting wait for news.

"The kids and the staff are just so excited that we've gone through the long process, and finally we have an outcome, and we're forever going to be in the history books," she said.

Ms Goodman said the project had strengthened the students' understanding of science and respect for the land.

"The kids and the staff are just so excited that we've gone through the long process, and finally we have an outcome, and we're forever going to be in the history books,"



Cotesia ginginensis is a parasitoid, meaning the wasp lays eggs in a larval host, feeding on and killing it as the wasp reaches maturity.

National Insect Expo Getting Close

The National Insect Expo is Australia's largest insect exhibition showcasing the entire Science of Entomology (Insects) to the general public.

The first National Insect Expo was held in July 2022 and over 6000 visitors attended the first event with many travelling from interstate in order to experience this unique event for the first time. The 2023 Expo was again held at the Woodend Buffalo Stadium in September that year and attracted more than 7000 visitors with quite a few arriving from overseas including Madrid, Hong Kong and Berlin. These international visitors were keen to network with Australian breeders and suppliers in order to facilitate business opportunities at the

event.

2024 was a fantastic event with over 100 exhibitors on show to the public over the 3 days. This event attracted even more international visitors from Singapore and the United States.

Now in its fourth year, and to be held on OCTOBER 3-4-5, this spectacular exhibition will continue to provide visitors with a unique and fascinating look into the world of insects and their relatives.

Featuring Entomologists, Insect Researchers, Breeders, Spider and Scorpion Keepers, Insect Educators and Specialist Insect Retailers, this amazing event also brings together a large number of static Entomological

Collections, 'Live' Insect displays, Spiders, Scorpions and Related Invertebrates, Childrens Workshops, Entomological Merchandise and the ongoing research work of the [National Institute of Entomology](#)

Over 100 exhibitors from all over Australia and New Zealand will once more provide spectacular displays, many of which are never seen by the public. Featured Insect Pantomime Entertainment is also provided in order to meet and greet all visitors and Quality Food Catering is also available On-Site during the entire 3 day event.



The largest insect event in Australia

Life Patron/Board Member - Dr Jenny Shield

Dr Jenny Shield is a National Institute of Entomology Honorary Member of the Board as well as the C.V.R.I.C Chief Research Biologist.

She is also an Honorary Research Associate of Latrobe University Bendigo.

She has held the position as La Trobe University, Pharmacy and Applied Science Adjunct Lecturer from 1997 to the present.

Jenny has been documenting the Invertebrate Fauna

of the region since the early 1990's and has a particular interest in the Arachnid Fauna of the region.

She has published extensively on the Spiders of Central Victoria and in particular the fauna of the Box Ironbark Ecosystem.

She is currently documenting and describing the Zodariidae (Ant Mimicking Spiders) of the region and how they relate to the Formicidae (Ant) fauna represented and held in the Institutes collections.



Dr Jenny Shield



La Trobe University—Bendigo Campus where Jenny taught for many years.

C.V.R.I.C Collection Databasing Continues

The Central Victorian Regional Insect Collection (C.V.R.I.C) has been getting attention for its Hymenoptera holdings over the past few months.

Dr Bert Candusio and several other assistants have been firstly separating the group from the entire collections and have started to sort out the various Families and Genera into storage unit trays.

Dr Candusio said that so far, there have been a lot of interesting and unusual specimens found in this part of the C.V.R.I.C and that he was looking forward to their

examination in greater detail over the next year or so.

One particular group that is well represented are the Gasteruptiidae, an unusual wasp family with extremely elongated abdomens.

They are specialists in targeting the eggs and larval stages of other wasp families using their elongated abdomens to seek into wasp nests.

They also have an unusual flight posture and hover in mid air while searching for potential hosts sites.

This make the enire family

quite distinctive from a visual standpoint.

'Once you observe any Gasteruptid wasp, you always tend to remember its appearance well', Dr Candusio said.



The Gasteruptiidae are an unusual family of parasitic wasps targeting the eggs and larvae of other wasp species.

Insectarium of Victoria Nostalgia

In August 1993, the first Insectarium in Australia was opened by Bert Candusio and his wife Amanda and was located at 221 High Street, Heathcote Victoria.

Although the facility was rather small in those times, it still managed to attract thousands of school children from all over Victoria including other states as well.

Day excursions would include lessons at the actual centre followed by a field trip to the well known [Pink](#)

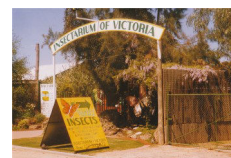
[Cliffs](#) area looking at local insect populations.

The IOV also attracted a large amount of media attention and was featured many times on [National Television](#) including Prime Time News, [Talk to the Animals](#), [7:30 Report](#), A Current Affair and many more.

The IOV also had its own [TV Commercial](#).

The collections were one of the few representative insect collections of Central

Victoria that existed but sadly enough, these were destroyed due to total neglect by the new owners in the early 2000's after the IOV relocated to Woodend.



Australia's first insectarium in Heathcote, Victoria



Dr Bert Candusio in August 1993 at the opening of the IOV

Institute Membership

Becoming a Member of the National Institute of Entomology offers several benefits such as:

- 1: Discounts to Members wishing to undertake our Courses and Training Programs.
- 2: Access to our facilities if you are wishing to work on your own Research or Study Project.
- 3: Members are offered the opportunity to serve on a variety of Organizing Com-

mittees and Sub Committees.

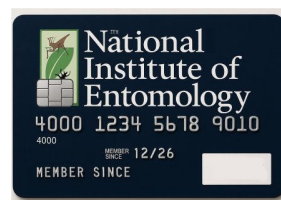
4: As a Member of the National Institute of Entomology, you receive our Monthly Newsletter keeping you updated on Institute News.

5: You are granted access to the Institutes extensive Forums covering Taxonomy/News/Job Vacancies and Volunteer Opportunities.

6: Discounted tickets to the annual National Insect Ex-

po.

To become a Member of the National Institute of Entomology, please visit our [Membership Page](#) for further details and Membership Options.



C.V.R.I.C Specimen Highlight

Abispa is a genus of large Australasian potter wasps belonging to the subfamily Eumeninae. The genus was first described in 1838 by Thomas Livingstone Mitchell.

Species of this genus are found throughout Australia, while *Abispa splendida* (Guerin, 1838) is found in both New Guinea and Australia.

The Mud Wasp (*Abispa ephippium*), also known as the Large Mud-nest Wasp, is a striking orange and black wasp that is similar and sometimes mistaken for the Orange-tailed Potter Wasp (*Delta latreillei*).

Abispa ephippium is a robust looking orange wasp, with a

wide black band on the abdomen, a large central black patch (on the mesoscutum) between the forewings, with black-tipped wings. Like many of these genus, the *Abispa ephippium* are solitary wasps who build mud pot-shaped nests, often in sheltered area. The mud nest is made up of a number of cell chambers, which the Mud Wasp fills with captured and paralysed caterpillars to feed the egg larvae that is laid in each cell chamber. Once the larva consumes all the food, they pupate and after a period of time they emerge as the adult.



Abispa ephippium



Russell George Wilkinson Collection

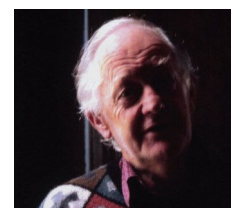
Dr Russell George Wilkinson (1/2/1939-2/7/2019) grew up in Perth, WA. His undergraduate degree was in the Zoology Dept at the University of Western Australia, majoring in Entomology.

This was when the bulk of his collection was made. It is possible that some of the specimens he collected at this time, particularly in the area of Perry's Lakes, are now extinct since this area has long since become a housing estate. His Professor advised him to get into 'this new molecular biology' and he won a scholarship to get his PhD from London University at the Lister Institute. (These days the once famous Lister Institute is a private hospital specialising in IVF and cosmetic surgery.) He followed this with Post-Doc work at Johns Hopkins in the US. He was offered a lecturer position in the

Dept of Microbiology at the University of Melbourne and that is where he remained until his retirement as senior lecturer. He specialised in anaerobic bacteriology. Although his career took him away from entomology, it remained a life-long interest. On a work trip to PNG in 1982 he bought some specimens to add to his collection, it being illegal to collect them himself. In retirement, his interest came to the fore. He ran a silkworm project which he took to local primary schools, having mastered the art of spinning the silk off the cocoon without harming the chrysalis. Thus the whole life cycle could be observed with the population controlled by the number of eggs one kept. After making the 'tree change' to Hepburn Shire and becoming a Foundation Member of the U3A and joining a local garden club, he gave

talks on insects and helped educate both adults and children on differences between types of insects, which insects were beneficial in the garden, which to be wary of etc. Dr Wilkinson's collection now resides with the C.V.R.I.C thanks to the generous donation by his wife Peppa..

He was something of a local expert and people would leave insects in jars in his letterbox for his opinion on whether they were 'good' or 'bad' on the particular plant on which they were found (or does this 'bite' and is it poisonous?). His expertise stretched to the arachnids and he was the 'go-to' man to rescue people at all hours from the mythical 'tarantula the size of a dinner plate' found in their home. This was despite his explaining that Australia lacks tarantulas and Huntsmen are indeed useful....



Dr Russell G Wilkinson
1939–2019



Part of the R.G. Wilkinson Collection

Research News - Finding a Living Fossil

In early December 2021, a team from the Institute headed by its Director Bert Candusio and renowned invertebrate seeker Trevor Glyn-Jones, went into a remote and heavily forested area of the Lerderg State Park in order to search for one of the most elusive and curious oddities of the animal kingdom.

This creature has remained virtually unchanged for over 540 million years and is known as the Peripatus or Velvet Worm.

Many biologists today consider it a living fossil and it represents the shape and form of one of the first creatures to have ever walked upon the dry land. Living a secluded and nocturnal existence, these animals live within rotting logs and feed on a large

variety of invertebrates such as ants, termites, spiders and cockroaches. Although only a few centimeters in length, they are voracious predators and capture their prey by means of sticky slime-like threads which they squirt onto their victim. Once secured, the prey is devoured by powerful slicing jaws.

The research team were curious to see if the animals still existed in the same locality based on the first specimen collected in 1895. Known as *Ooperipatus oviparus* (Dendy, 1895), these animals are rarely seen by members of the public and so the institute Team was keen to find at least one specimen to help highlight the importance of habitat conservation. Only one specimen was found after many hours of detailed searching.

The specimen was recently a *Special Guest* on the Institutes TV Zoom Cast and many viewers were amazed at the appearance of this wondrous little animal. Another Zoom *Special* Episode devoted to this animal will be scheduled soon.

Details will be available on the entoinsitute.org website.



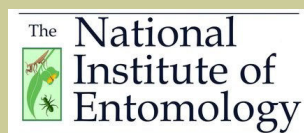
PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL
INSTITUTE OF ENTOMOLOGY

REGISTERED OFFICE:
9 BANKSIA COURT
WOODEND. VIC. 3442

PH: +61 3 7038 9452

ADMIN@ENTOINSTITUTE.ORG

LINKS



entoinstitute.org

The National Institute of Entomology NEWS accepts advertising from all Entomological suppliers, businesses and institutions.

If you are interested in advertising here, please contact the institute on: admin@entoinstitute.org

CONSERVATION.RESEARCH.TRAINING.

The National Institute of Entomology provides a variety of specialized services to assist Primary Producers, Conservation Organisations and Industry.

Our services include Insect and Invertebrate Identifications, Environmental Surveys and Assessments, Consultancy for Primary Producers and Conservation Groups as well as advising members of the public looking at enhancing the biodiversity of their own land holdings.

For further information, please visit our [SERVICES PAGE](#) or contact the Institute to discuss your requirements or project.

The Institute is supported by the kind generosity of members of the public by way of donations to the Institute. Such donations may be in the form of unwanted Scientific Equipment (microscopes, laboratory supplies etc), Entomological Reference Books, Audio Visual Equipment, Entomological Insect Collections or Monetary Donations.



These generous contributions assist the Institute in supporting our students and members of the public that are undergoing entomological studies and programs as well as supporting the Institutes Ongoing Research Work. If you are wanting to make a valued Donation towards our work, here is the link: [Donations](#)

If you would like to consider and discuss making another non monetary donation to the National Institute of Entomology, please feel free to contact us on [ad-
min@entoinstitute.org](mailto:admin@entoinstitute.org)

Study Opportunities

The National Institute of Entomology provides specific On-Line Courses, Training Presentations, National Entomology Club, Demonstrations and Entomological Lectures that can cater for both the individual or a larger group of up to 50 students interested in gaining knowledge on various entomology based subjects.

Courses and Programs are offered throughout the year and include Certificate Courses in General Entomology, Applied Entomology, Insect Classification, Identification Courses, Entomological Collecting Techniques and much more.

See our [COURSES PAGE](#) for more details.

Say goodbye to You-Tube videos. Here you get to directly interact with, as well as ask questions to

your National Institute of Entomology Lecturer in real time.

Our C.S.I.R.O Qualified presenters will show you that there is no better or more effective way to learn a valuable entomological skill or acquiring an Entomological Course Certificate than by using the Institutes On-Line programs.

From Specialist Courses, Identification of Insects, Preserving Specimens, Rearing Techniques....the subjects available to you are vast.

Want to have something specific presented to you or your group? This is the place for all your Courses, Lecture and Demonstration requirements. Details on all courses are available on our [COURSES PAGE](#).

The Institute uses Zoom, a popular conferencing application for both PC or Mobile devices. You can download Zoom here: [ZOOM DOWN-LOAD PAGE](#)

