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NATIONAL INSTITUTE of ENTOMOLOGY NEWS



The
National
Institute of
Entomology

The official newsletter of the National Institute of Entomology

Volume 2: Issue 4

April 2026

FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Hello everyone and welcome to the April Edition of the N.I.O.E News.

Following up from last months issue, let me share with you all one of the absolute highlights of our recent trip to New Zealand where we arranged to visit the Auckland Zoo on a fact finding mission.

The goal of the visit was to meet up with the curator of the Giant Weta Breeding Program Dr Don McFarlane, and to gain a better understanding of the methods being used in order to save

this incredible insect from extinction.

Originally found on the mainland around the Auckland region, the species was wiped out with the introduction of rats, weasels and cats.

Fortunately, several of the animals managed to hang on while living on a few isolated islands several miles offshore from Auckland.

Adults from these islands were brought to the zoo for breeding and re-release.

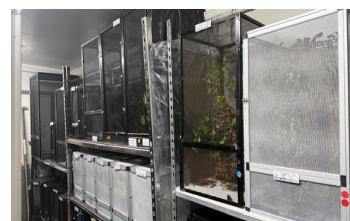
The program has been so successful that several thousand Giant Weta or Wetapangu are now thriving on these isolated islands.

The valuable information gained during our visit with Don will greatly assist the institute for future planned breeding projects involving our orthopteran native species.

See you all in May.



Dr Bert Candusio and institute treasurer Mrs Amanda Candusio with curator Dr Don McFarlane.



Part of the Giant Weta Breeding Facility at Auckland Zoo

The Giant Weta Success Story

Thanks to the efforts of Dr Don McFarlane and the staff of Auckland Zoo, this incredible insect (one of the the heaviest in the world), has been saved from extinction.

In this day and age of rapid insect extinctions, it's indeed a pleasant outcome seeing species like this being saved by dedicated zoologists.



Institute Now a Registered Charity

The National Institute of Entomology was recently approved as a Charitable Organisation for Taxation Purposes by the Not For Profit and Charities Commission on the 25th of February 2026.

The Institutes Chairman, Dr Bert Candusio said that after considerable paperwork and assistance by our Legal Team, the Commission granted our approval after several months.

'The new status of a Charitable Institution as registered by the Commission, gives a greater sense of confidence to members of the public considering making a donation to the Institute into the future', he said.

This also means that donations by individuals, Incorporated Companies or Organizations may be tax deductible to the value of the individual donations.



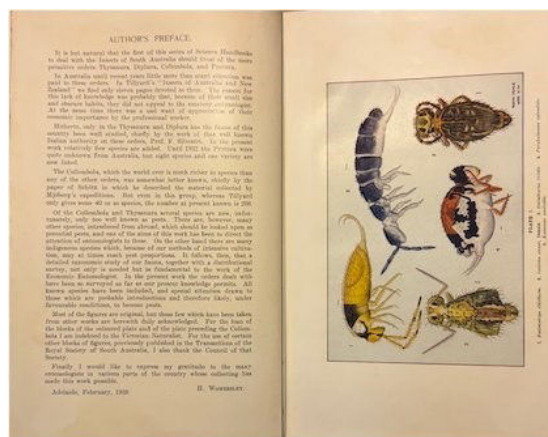
Such donations may take the form of Reference Books for the Institutes Library, Scientific Equipment, Insect Collections or financial donations.

Institute Expands Its Reference Library

There have been several important additions to the National Institute of Entomology Reference Library recently.

These works include: Grasshoppers of New Zealand, An Atlas of Invertebrate Structure, Mathematical Ecology, Pest Control: Biological, Physical and Selective Chemical Methods, Insecticide Resistance in Arthropods and Entomophagous Insects to name a few.

Some of the rarest acquisitions include: Primitive Insects of South Australia, A Bibliography of the Psocoptera (Booklice) and Scientific and Common Names of Insects and Allied Forms Occurring in Australia by C.S.I.R.O. More acquisitions will be arriving in the next few months.



Australian Entomological Supplies is a family-owned business that has been supplying entomologists, educators and enthusiasts alike with quality scientific equipment, supplies and books since 1962.

We proudly manufacture some of the finest entomological equipment available worldwide, right here in Australia.

We are situated in the Northern Rivers of New South Wales, from where we supply products throughout Australia and the rest of the world.

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SINCE 1962

From the Forum—New Lord Howe Island Stick Insects Found

'There is renewed hope for the survival of an insect once thought extinct, after two healthy colonies were found on a rock outcrop of Lord Howe Island.'

'The sheer rock islet was formed more than 6 million years ago by volcanic activity, and at 572 meters it is the tallest volcanic stack in the world. The challenging geography makes visits difficult but during a short, opportunistic survey by the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), weed officers discovered insects at two new locations.' 'This species is very cryptic and hard to detect as they have an incredible ability to hide and camouflage them-

selves," threatened species officer Craig Stehn said.

'The officers found a total of nine adult insects. Seven were captured for breeding purposes.

The latest discovery of the insect, scientifically known as *Dryococelus australis*, marks 25 years since the insect was first rediscovered on Ball's Pyramid. The insects were once so common, they were used as bait by early settlers on Lord Howe until black rats colonised the island after a shipwreck in 1918. After 15 years of rodent predation, the stick insect was believed extinct before it was rediscovered in 2001 on the remote outcrop.



From the Forum cont... Tagging the Bogong Moth

Western Sydney University researchers are heading to Mount Kosciuszko to tag up to 10,000 Bogong moths in one of the most ambitious insect tracking projects ever undertaken in Australia.

The project aims to uncover where these iconic moths travel after leaving the alpine caves they call home each summer – and the University is inviting community members from the Snowy Mountains region to take part in tracking their journey. From 23 February, a team of researchers will spend two weeks at Charlotte Pass in the Snowy Mountains, working from dusk until dawn.

Hundreds of thousands of Bogong moths emerge from the alpine caves at sunset in a spectacular natural phenomenon.

Each night, moths will be drawn to specialised light traps, then tagged and released the next day. The meticulous, entirely manual process aims to mark up to 1,000 moths per day, helping researchers track a species whose massive migration remains largely unknown.

This year, the expedition team is sharing the research experience with citizen scientists across south-eastern Australia.

Volunteers can host specialised "bug lanterns" in their gardens or local green spaces from March to May 2026.



The Bogong Moth, *Agrotis infusa*

From the Forum cont... Worlds Oldest Spider Dies

'The world's oldest known spider has died at the ripe old age of 43 after being monitored for years during a long-term population study in Australia, researchers say.

The trapdoor matriarch comfortably outlived the previous record holder, a 28-year-old tarantula found in Mexico, according to a study published on Monday in the *Pacific Conservation Biology Journal*.

The spider did not die of old age but was killed by a wasp sting, researchers said.'

"To our knowledge this is the oldest spider ever recorded, and her significant life has allowed us to further investigate the trapdoor spider's behavior and population dynamics," said the lead author, Leanda Mason from Curtin University in Perth.

A research project to study trapdoor spiders in the central wheat belt region of Western Australia was launched in 1974 by Barbara York Main, during which Number 16 was found and monitored.

"Through Barbara's detailed research, we were able to determine that the extensive life span of the trapdoor spider is due to their life-history traits, including how they live in uncleared, native bushland, their sedentary nature and low metabolisms," Mason said.'



Image One: Number 16, a female trapdoor spider who was the world's oldest known spider.

Institute Submission Outcome Due Soon

The National Institute of Entomology recently submitted to the Shire of Mitchell Council its Expression of Interest (EOI) application for the permanent use and occupancy of the Kilmore Town Hall situated at 16 Sydney Street, Kilmore.

The deadline for the EOI submissions ended on the 13th of March with the Institutes as well as another 2 more submissions being entered.

The Institute emphasized both the scientific and economic injection our organization could make into the local and regional district if we were

granted the buildings use permanently.

The Institute also provided information as to the National and International patronage by students undertaking our courses and the need for their accommodation, food and fuel requirements..a further bonus to local businesses.

The Application outcome should be known in the next 2 to 3 weeks. Lets keep our fingers crossed that after 6 years, our search has finally come to an end.



Where are all the Insects?

Global insect populations are declining rapidly, with studies suggesting over 40% of species are threatened with extinction.

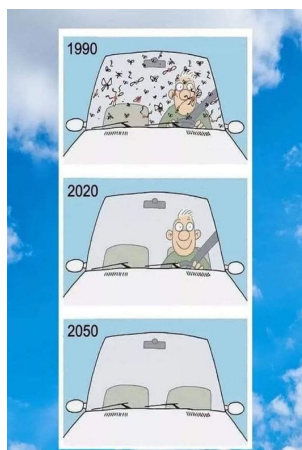
This "insect apocalypse" sees a ~2.5% decrease in total mass annually, threatening vital ecosystem services like pollination and waste decomposition.

Primary causes are habitat loss, pesticides, climate change, and pollution.

The Key Aspects of Insect Disappearance are:

- **Scale of Decline:** Flying insect populations in German nature reserves decreased by 75% over 27 years. A 98% reduction in ground insects was recorded in Puerto Rico rainforest.
- **Habitat Loss:** Urban sprawl and agricultural intensification.
- **Pesticides & Pollution:** Industrial farming chemicals, fertilizers, and light pollution.
- **Climate Change:** Extreme heat and changing weather cycles.
- **Introduced Species:** Non-native plants and animals disrupting ecosystems.

The Main Drivers Are:



How To Help

Plant native species to create habitats.

Reduce or eliminate pesticide use.

Leave some garden areas untidy for insects to shelter.

Turn off external lights at night.

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 Committees and Sub Committees.

4: As a Member of the National Institute of Entomology, you receive our Monthly Newsletter

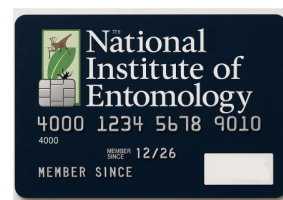
keeping you updated on Institute News.

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 Expo.

To become a Member of the National Institute of Entomology, please visit our

[Membership Page](#) for further details and Membership Options.



Institute Specimen Spotlight

Specimen Number: 000484

***Polistes erythrinus* (Holmgren, 1868)**

The Vespidae or paper / potter wasps are a diverse, commonly encountered family comprising about 350 described species in Australia.

The family is naturally absent from New Zealand but is now represented by five introduced species.

Vespid are characterised by usually having the inner margin of the eyes strongly emarginate, the postero-lateral corners of the pronotum acutely pointed above the tegulae, both sexes being fully winged,

the fore wings usually folded longitudinally at rest, and body size small to medium (5–30 mm).

Paper wasps are found on every continent except for Antarctica. In North America, they are most common in the eastern and south-central parts of the United States. They are a cosmopolitan genus.



Volunteer of the Month – Steve Stevens

Steve Stevens is one of the biggest supporters of the Institute and whenever there is a heavy lifting job to take care of, Steve is always there for us.

His biggest job of the year is the setting up of the Exhibitors Display Tables, Chairs and Office Partitions for our National Insect Expo.

Steve follows the Exhibition Managers Floor Plan to the nearest centimeter.

Steve has got this to the point where he can setup an entire

Basketball Stadium of up to 100 tables in under 90 minutes!.

Many expo visitors comment each year as to the comfortable space allocated for wheelchair users thanks to Steve. Without Steve's continued support and assistance, the Expo would not happen.

Thanks always Steve.



Mr Steve Stevens plays a vital role each year in helping to setup the National Insect Expo.

Bug Club Students Create Bug Games

Students of the National Bug Club have been busy with classes and were recently given a rather challenging assignment.

The class was featuring a rather unusual ladybird beetle known as *Illeis galbula* as the featured 'Insect of the Week' segment.

Students were then given a challenging assignment

where they were tasked to come up with either a board or card game based on beetles.

Students have come up with some fantastic concepts and ideas and have submitted their work with great enthusiasm.

Perhaps its because the best concept, use of imagination and level of the

'fun' factor will enable them to be in the running for a great prize courtesy of Australian Entomological Supplies. Monopoly and Chess....Watch out!!



New Species of Tarantula Discovered with Blue Legs

Researchers have discovered a new species of tarantula lurking in mangrove swamps – and they have vibrant blue legs.

The arachnid was discovered inhabiting hollow trees, in Phang-Nga, Thailand. They like to live in humid and wet conditions.

Caused by its unique hair nanostructure, the spider omits an electric blue colour. "The difficulty of catching an electric-blue tarantula lies in the need to climb a tree and lure it out of a complex of hollows," said researcher Dr Narin Chomphuphuang.

"During our expedition, we walked in the evening and at

night during low tide, managing to collect only two of them."

Blue is one of the rarest colours to appear in nature, absorbing very small amounts of energy to reflect the blue light.

Creating an iridescent effect, the species is known as *Chilobrachys Natanicharum*, the Electric Blue Tarantula.

This spider is one of the rarest tarantulas in the world, facing extinction due to the looming threat of deforestation of the mangrove forests.

The researchers are thus campaigning for preservation efforts, hoping to save the newly discovered species.



Parasitic wasp with a giant head discovered

Scientists have unearthed a new species of wasp in the Amazon – and it's rather terrifying.

The alien-looking parasitic creature came to light when a team at Utah State University were researching Allpahuayo-Mishana National Reserve in Peru.

The wasp, known as *Capitojoppa amazonica*, has a giant almond-shaped

head and is known to latch on to prey before sucking its blood and then eating it from the inside.

It does so by laying eggs in its victims including caterpillars, beetles and spiders. The study's lead author, biologist Brandon Claridge called the practice a "solitary endoparasitoid".

"Once the host is located and mounted, the female will frantically stroke it

with her antennae," Claridge told *Live Science* in an email. "If acceptable, the female will deposit a single egg inside the host by piercing it with her ovipositor (a tube-like, egg-laying organ)."

He went on to explain that in some instances, "females will even stab the host with the ovipositor and feed without laying an egg as it helps with gaining nutrients for egg maturation."



Product Review—A.E.S Butterfly Nets

If you are looking for a great quality butterfly collecting net, look no further than the A.E.S range of collecting net products. Made of high quality aluminium, these nets are both light and durable and designed for easy transport. A.E.S has many different models to choose from including sweeping, aquatic, dip nets and many more. Check out their models here: <https://www.entosupplies.com.au/equipment/field/nets-complete/>

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Next Introduction to Entomology Course

The National Institute of Entomology Introduction to Entomology Course will again commence on April 29th 2026 and enrolments are now open to students.

This is by far, the Institutes most popular course as it not only acts as an introductory course but also allows entry to other more specific courses offered by the Institute.

The Introduction to Entomology Course is currently offered as an On-Line Zoom based course but once the Institute

relocates to the new premises at the Kilmore Town Hall, this particular and popular course will also be offered at the new venue.

This will assist students by giving them a more hands on element to their studies.

The Institute is also increasing students numbers for this course from 20 to 30 to accommodate the amount of interest by students that this course attracts.



Seeking A Volunteer Institute Librarian

The National Institute of Entomology is currently searching for a voluntary librarian to assist in cataloging its research and reference library.

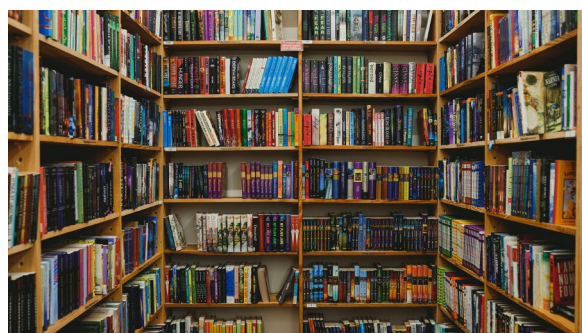
This would ideally suit a retired librarian with an interest in the biological sciences (entomology especially).

With the pending relocation of the Institute in the next few weeks hopefully, the need for a fully indexed and

working library will become more and more important for attending students.

Currently, the Institute holds about 800 reference works and close to 1500 separate PDF publications.

If you are interested, please contact our secretary on secretary@entoinstitute.org



Forensic Entomology Courses Coming Soon

In an exciting new program, the National Institute of Entomology will be offering for the first time a course on Forensic Entomology.

The course will be presented by Dr Molly Waldron and cover the main groups of invertebrate parasites which infect humans. The course will look at identification, transmission and life cycles.

The course will concentrate on endoparasites such as Nematodes, Trematodes and Cestodes, as well as Ectoparasites including Annelids, Ticks, Fleas and Flies.

This exciting course will be limited to 35 students so register early. Details here:

<https://programs.entoinstitute.org/products/forensic-entomology-cert-module-1-coming-in-2026-course-duration-3-weeks-copy>



2026 National Insect Expo Planning Underway

The 2026 National Insect Expo will soon open for Exhibitor Registrations and public tickets will go on line at the end of March.

With the nationally televised episode of the ABC's Gardening Australia later this year, the expo is bound to attract many more visitor numbers than the 7000+ visitors that attended the event last year.

Exhibitors should expect Expo Emails to be sent out at the end of March calling for Registrations for 2026.



Inside The Institutes New Home

The National Institute of Entomology has been searching for a permanent home for close to 6 years now and it looks very promising that we have finally found one.

The Kilmore Town Hall building will offer us nearly 400 square meters of floor space including upstairs Laboratory classroom space, room for our library and Reception area.

There is also sufficient space for administration and offices including a fully functional kitchen as well.

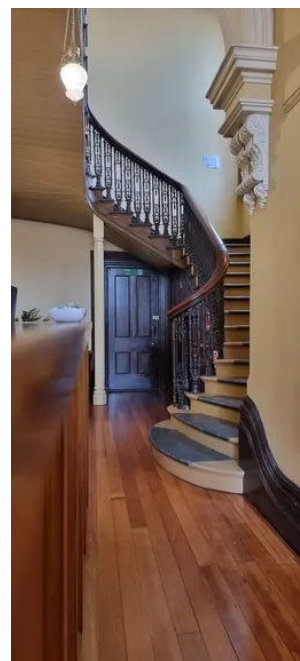
Situated at 16 Sydney Street Kilmore, the building has a prominent position on the main street with ample car parking spaces to the rear of the building.

One of the first items that will be needed is a suitable internet service and Aussie Broadband will be

assisting the Institute in connection to the fiber optic entry point already in place.

The plan is for a 1 Gigabyte download and 500 Megabyte upload speed in order to cater for our video conferencing requirements now and into the future.

The Institute will allow up to 4 weeks to relocate all entomological collections,



The main Reception area leading up to the second floor classrooms.

Cont...

research library, imaging equipment and furniture as needed. All or staff are keen to complete relocation as soon as possible.

Of special note is that the Mitchell Shire Council fully restored both the interior and exterior of the building in 2015 so no other works will be required prior to the Institute moving in.



The main building situated at 16 Sydney Street, Kilmore

An Expo Exhibitor Story - Annas Antics

My name is Anna, I was born in Vietnam and have lived in Indonesia as well. Most of my schooling was at an International School in Jakarta.

My family returned to Australia in 2015 and I have lived here ever since. I've been passionate about insects since my childhood and had a particular interest in ants in particular. I've been ant keeping since 2017 after I came across a YouTube video about keeping ants as pets. .

The secret life of ants intrigued me and I became fascinated by these creatures.

I enjoy going on bush walks to discover and observe different species of ants.

I collect queen ants when the conditions are right and feel rewarded once a healthy colony is established which makes my hobby more special to me.



Cont...

As my collection of ants grew over the years, I've made my own YouTube Channel named Anna's

Antics. I showcase my personal collection and captured footage of the development and behaviour of my ants. I include my creative side by decorating the outworlds that are needed and choosing my own formicarium for them. I find ants to be extraordi-

nary insects that most people don't pay attention to. I really hope to encourage more ant keepers!



Institute Pioneers - Ms Larissa Morey

Ms Larissa Moray was our very first volunteer not long after the Insectarium of Victoria first opened to the public in Heathcote Victoria in 1992.

Larissa would travel up from Melbourne each week in order to assist with school excursions, administration and supporting the day to day operations at the centre.

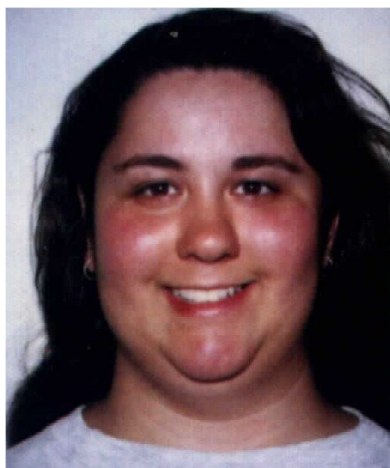
She also assisted with Administration, Sales and Excursions.

She has kept her valuable association with the IOV well after its re-location to Woodend and

has remained a valuable contributor to the Institute ever since.

Its through the contributions of people like Larissa, that share a passion for our invertebrate fauna that the vital conservation message regarding these animals gets through to the general public.

Larissa..Thank You.



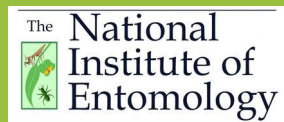
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admin@entoinsitute.org

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Members Committee Opportunity

The National Institute of Entomology will shortly be calling for interested members to serve on the Institutes Funding and Grants Committee.

The role of the Committee will be to apply for grants and funding in order to assist the Institute towards equipment acquisitions, purchase of entomological storage cabinets and other equipment or institute training and courses programs.

Keep watching this section for further announcements and when to apply.

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@entoinsitute.org](mailto:admin@entoinsitute.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](#)

