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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 5

May 2026

FROM THE CHAIRMAN



WE'VE DONE IT!

Greetings everyone.

I have great pleasure in announcing that the National Institute of Entomology has succeeded in its submission to the Mitchell Shire Council for the permanent occupancy of the historic Kilmore Town Hall building.

This is the result of close to 6 years of searching, frustration and determination by our organization in order to secure a permanent location not only for our students, but for the entomological collections themselves.

Our relocation will also be including our Research Reference Library, Imaging Equipment and Student Laboratory equipment.

The move will be a logistics challenge involving staff, volun-

teers and removalists in order to get everything safely into the new location. Of particular concern will be the relocation of the Central Victorian Regional Insect Collection.

Preserved and pinned insect specimens require special preparation for transportation due to their fragile nature.

We will be using Badger Removals for this task as they have prior experience working with the C.V.R.I.C collections when they were originally removed from La-Trobe University Bendigo to Woodend in 2021.

Every drawer in every cabinet will need to be inspected for any specimens that will be requiring cross pinning and bracing in order to avoid damage during the move. Fortunately, the new location is a relatively short distance away and that will help.

The timing will also be challenging as the move will be colliding with our 2026 National Insect Expo preparations.

With our dedicated staff and supporting volunteers, I am confident that this challenge will be met head on and result in the successful completion of this huge task. See you all with an

update in June.

Dr Bert Candusio



The Historic Kilmore Town Hall situated at 16 Sydney Street Kilmore, the National Institute of Entomology new permanent home.

Trying Times For Our Chairman

Our Chairman, Dr Bert Candusio has been a constant inspiration to all our staff and volunteers throughout the 6 years of his searching in order to find the National Institute of Entomology a permanent home.

There were many times when we thought he would just give up this goal with each and every frustrating setback.

However, he would always pick himself up and move onto the next opportunity as it presented itself with a new vigor and ener-

gy that often bewildered everyone here.

However, this wasn't without personal consequences for him.

During these past 6 years, he suffered from a transient ischemic stroke effecting his left arm. He also underwent major heart bypass surgery in order to address a blocked artery in his heart.

Through all of this, he kept overcoming these setbacks that were effecting his personal and

health issues and just kept going and going.

He has inspired all of us and we want to publicly say Thank You.

- From all the institute volunteers.

Hoverflies Carry Pollen Hundreds of Kilometers

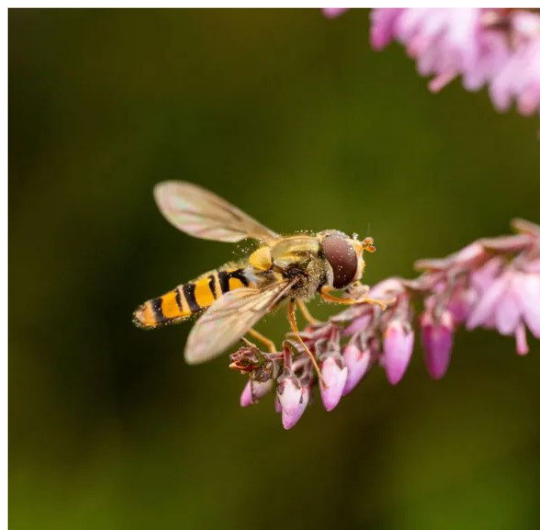
A study into migratory hoverflies on a North Sea oil rig has revealed their role as long-distance pollinators. University of Exeter researchers studied 121 marmalade hoverflies that landed on the rig in the Britannia oil field, near Scotland.

Pollen was found on 92% of the hoverflies which experts said proved the insects could transport it over long distances. With no vegetation on the rig and no land nearby, it may potentially link plant that are hundreds of kilometers apart. "By analyzing the pollen samples and wind patterns, we

estimate that many of the hoverflies had flown from places including the Netherlands, northern Germany and Denmark – over 500km away," said Toby Doyle, from the Centre for Ecology and Conservation on Exeter's Penryn Campus in Cornwall.

"The most common pollen types were common nettle, black elder and meadowsweet – but they also carried pollen from crops including vegetable, legume, cereal, nut and fruit species."

The study was funded by the Royal Society.



University student caught trying to smuggle hundreds of insects and spiders out of Australia

A university student has been fined \$35,000 after attempting to smuggle over 100 insects and spiders out of Australia.

The student named Qiran Zhang was stopped at Sydney International Airport, and upon investigation he was found to have 125 different specimens in his luggage. This included a carabid beetle, a giant rainforest centipede, a banded desert centipede, banded huntsman spiders and an atlas rainforest beetle.

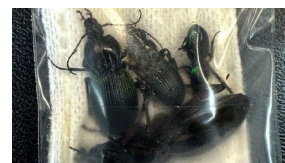
Up to 76 of the specimens found were of regulated native

species. Under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, exporting native wildlife without a permit is illegal. Those found guilty could face penalties of up to 10 years imprisonment, a fine of up to \$330,000, or both.

Ultimately, Zhang pleaded guilty to all charges, was convicted and fined.

The still live animals were sent to Taronga Wildlife Hospital in Sydney for care and identification. It is not known how many survived, but the Australian Department of Environment reminded Australians many insects do not survive illegal trade.

"Legal export pathways exist. This protects animal welfare, supports ethical supply chains, and reduces demand for black market trade," they said in a statement.



Some of the insects found in Zhang's luggage.

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.

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If you have an entomological equipment need, we can most certainly meet it!

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Bug Club Competition Winner – Zander Hawley

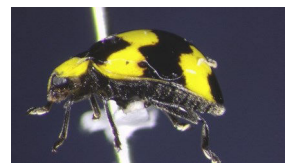
As reported in last months news, students of the Institutes [National Bug Club](#) were tasked with designing either a board or card game based on a beetles theme. This was given as part of a lesson on the ladybird beetle species *Illeis galbula* in our 'Insect of the Week' segment.

The winning entry came from Zander Hawley. Zander designed an inventive and unusual game that was not only

fun to play, but was also 3 dimensional.!

In the game, players are given Christmas beetles that move up a eucalyptus tree after they emerge from the soil. Moves are determined by overturning gum leaves.

First to the top wins. Cool.. Congratulations Zander. Enjoy your AES Butterfly Net First Prize.



The beetle that inspired the winning entry to our Design a Beetle Game — *Illeis galbula*.

National Insect Expo Registrations Open

Exhibitor registrations for the 2026 National Insect Expo have now opened and it looks like we are getting an early and great response already.

Exhibitors from all across Australia, New Zealand and possibly South East Asia will again be offered an opportunity to showcase the science of entomology to the general public over the 3 days of the event.

There are some special events this year that are sure to attract even bugger crowds than last year.

ABC Nation Radio will be launching the 2026 National Insect of the Year competition at this years expo. This will be shared with a National audience.

Also, the ABC Television Program Gardening Australia will go to air nationally with the episode

featuring the 2025 Expo event.

This will really help get the word out on a National level.



cont...

Since 2022, the National Insect Expo has truly become a highlight of the Entomological Calendar not only for exhibitors, but for the general public as well.

Of particular significance is the popularity of the event for young children that have always held a fascination for the world of Insects.

Roll on October 2nd, 2026!



ABC Gardening Australia Expo 2025 Episode

The 2025 National Insect Expo was visited by the Cast and Crew of the ABC national program Gardening Australia last year.

The crew began filming early on the Saturday at around 7:30 am and they continued doing interviews up until 4:00 pm that day.

We have just received word that the Gardening Australia Episode 17 featuring the National Insect Expo will go to air on Friday June 5th nationally.

Freya and the crew were very excited to be at our event and the episode has turned out to be one of the programs best so far.

Since the episode will go to air on a National level, we are positive that this will increase visitation numbers from all states in Australia and make the 2026 National Insect Expo an even greater success.

Our thanks to the fantastic team at Gardening Australia as we look forward to enjoying watching the episode!



Support Needed For Our Go Fund Me

The National Institute of Entomology has begun a Go Fund Me campaign for essential equipment that will be required at the new facility once we settle in.

The new site, situated at 16 Sydney Street, Kilmore Victoria, will require up to 30 research grade microscopes for use by students undertaking specific in house courses with the Institute.

Although there are cheaper models that are manufactured

in China, the optical quality of these instruments is not the standard required.

The institute will be looking at acquiring used but good quality Olympus SZ40 or SZ 60 Models with trinocular configurations to allow the attachment of imaging instruments to be added at a later stage.

Please consider supporting this important fundraising effort for our future students.

<https://gofund.me/376dd5d55>



Two of the Models of the Olympus SZ40 that will be required for institute students. 30 of these units will be needed.

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

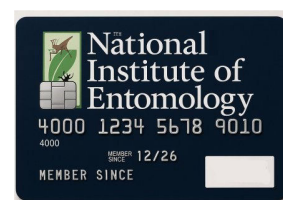
keeping you updated on Institute News.

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.



C.V.R.I.C Specimen Spotlight

C.V.R.I.C Specimen:000506

**AMPHIPODA / Talitridae /
Arcitalitrus sylvaticus
(Haswell, 1879)**

Collection Date: 20 November 2025

Location: 37 20'21.55 S 144 32'10 E

Lawn prawns (*Arcitalitrus sylvaticus*), or forest hoppers, are small (up to 7mm) terrestrial crustaceans often found in Australian gardens. They live in mulch and leaf litter, feeding on decay-

ing organic matter.

Often appearing in homes after heavy rain, they are harmless, do not bite, and quickly die in dry condition.

Normally found in forests and suburban gardens, where they live under logs, mulch, and leaf litter.

Originally described from Sri Lanka, but now widespread in warm temperate climates across the

Indo-Pacific region; common in eastern New South Wales and south-eastern Queensland.



Volunteer of the Month - Maria Liew

Maria Liew has been a great supporter of the National Institute of Entomology since its very first National Insect Expo held back in 2022.

Maria gives up her time every year to attend the event and to offer her invaluable nursing knowledge in order to look after staff, visitors and guests that attend.

Being a Registered and

fully qualified nurse allows her to offer all required medical assistance for whatever the situation may call for.

In one instance, one of our visitors suffered from a Grand Mal seizure and Maria took all necessary actions to assist the patient until the arrival of Paramedics at the scene.

It is a great comfort to the Expo Team in having

Marias help and assistance every year.

If you get to see her at the Expo this year, say thanks.



Book Review -The Insects of Australia CSIRO

If ever you wanted to make an investment of a textbook dealing with the Australian Insect Fauna, then this monumental work is a must have.

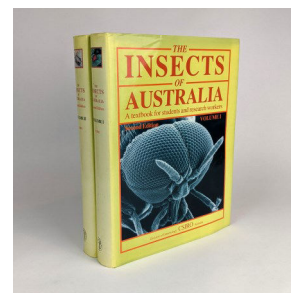
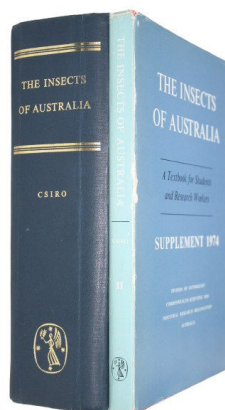
Originally published in 1970 and republished as the 2 volume second edition, this work covers all Australian Insect Orders, Families and numerous known Genera.

Many Taxonomic identification keys also form a valuable component of this publi-

cation.

The first edition also had a Supplement published after 1972 while the last edition came in 2 large volumes.

Although long out of print, copies occasionally turn up on Ebay and Amazon so keep looking and one will turn up.



The original First Edition with the Supplement (left) and the Second 2 Volume edition (above).

Giant Spider Web Housing 111,000 Spiders Found in Cave

Right now, as you read this, more than 110,000 arachnids are crawling around the world's largest spiderweb.

The 'extraordinary' but skin-crawling discovery was made inside a pitch-black cave on the Albanian-Greek border.

The web stretches 1,140 square feet – about the size of a semi-detached house in the UK – and is home to two species of spider.

One is the *Tegenaria domestica*, otherwise called domestic house spiders, while the other is the far smaller sheet weaver, *Prinerigone vagans*. Both live together within a patchwork of webs spread along the wall of a low-ceilinged passage, according to a study published in the journal *Subterranean Biology*.

The spider lair was discovered in the Sulfur Cave, a chamber hollowed out by sulphuric acid formed when hydrogen sulphide – an egg-smelling gas – from groundwater reacted with oxygen.

Spiders aren't exactly known to be social creatures, so this might be the first example of two arachnids creating a colony, study lead István Urák, of the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania in Romania, told **Metro**.

'This discovery is remarkable from several perspectives: it represents probably the largest spider web in the world, with the largest known spider colonies,' he said. 'It is also a unique case of two species cohabiting within the same web structure in this huge number: approximately 69,000 *Tegenaria domestica* coexist with about 42,000 *Prinerigone vagans* on this single large web.'

The sprawling web was first spotted by cavers from the Czech Speleological Society in 2022.

Researchers – Urák included – visited the cave two years later to analyze the spiders. What he saw was quite a sight. 'In our lives, we experience a few events that affect us in a way that is difficult to put into words,' he said.



Maggot Therapy Gets Popular

The thought of having wriggling maggots tipped into an open wound might seem like the stuff of nightmares for some people, but for doctors in the United Kingdom the technique is actually a key tool to save lives. Maggots played a critical role in helping clean and heal wounded soldiers' injuries during the first World War, and the treatment is now seeing a resurgence.

Data from Britain's NHS Digital shows the number of treatments given in England increased from 886 in 2008-9 to 1305 a decade later in 2018-19. The reason behind the increase is antibiotic resistance,

an issue becoming increasingly prevalent.

Studies have suggested maggot therapy can be extremely effective in treating hard-to-heal skin wounds, while also costing a lot less than most alternatives. The treatment includes placing a "tea bag" of larvae – no bigger than a millimeter in size – on top of open tissue, covered with a dressing and left for about four days.

The maggots will then feed on the dead tissue and secrete antimicrobial molecules that disinfect the wound.

Though undesirable for some,

many medics are highly in favour of the therapy after witnessing its benefits and effectiveness first-hand.



Maggot treatment has seen a resurgence in recent times.

National Institute of Entomology Database Takes Shape

Work has continued on the National Institute of Entomology Database and the final little tweaks have now been ironed out.

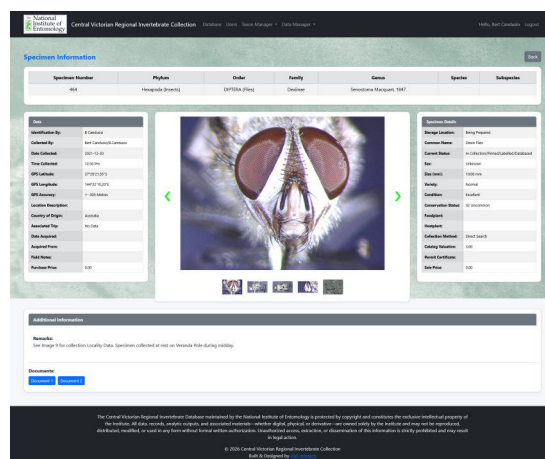
The system is now ready for volunteers and students to begin adding specimen records once the move to our new home in Kilmore is completed.

The wonderful advantage of the way the database has been designed is that the system can be accessed from any location worldwide so that staff can continue

working on data entries regardless of their location.

At the same time, volunteers at the Institute can simultaneously continue working with the system as well.

In the next few years, the database will become a major source of biological information for ecologists.



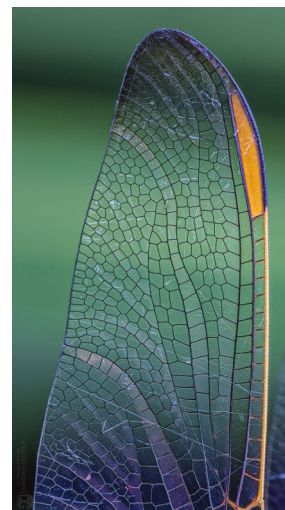
Dragonflies are losing their wing color

As the planet warms, a study found that male dragonflies are losing a crucial feature they typically use to attract female mates: the ornate black patterns on their wings.

The new research published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* found that male dragonflies are adapting to a warming climate by shedding more of their darker wing patterns. Researchers worry that female species may no longer recognize their male counterparts without their intricate wing patterns and, thus, won't be

able to reproduce as temperatures get hotter. "Our research shows that males and females of these dragonfly species are going to shift in pretty different ways as the climate changes," Michael Moore, lead author of the study and an evolutionary biologist at Washington University in St. Louis, told CNN.

"These changes are going to happen likely on a much faster timescale than the evolutionary changes in these species have ever occurred before." Mr Moore and his colleagues analyzed a database of more than 300 dragonfly species across the US, Canada and northern Mexico, and cross-referenced the wing colors of roughly 2700 individual dragonflies from different species across different locations and climate.



Cont...

According to a study Mr Moore co-authored in 2019, male dragonflies with darker wing patterns thrive under colder conditions, whereas warmer conditions dramatically reduce their performance.

The latest study highlights that male dragonflies adapted to warmer temperatures by evolving less melanin on their wing patterns. "Evolutionary changes and wing coloration are a really consistent way that dragon-

flies adapt to their climates," he said.

"This got us wondering what the role of evolutionary changes in wing coloration might be as dragonflies respond to the rise in global temperatures."

A darker wing coloration is a crucial mating trait for male dragonflies, enticing female mates.

But just as dark roads absorb the sun's heat, dark

wing pigments increase the dragonflies' body temperatures by up to two degrees Celsius, damaging their wing tissue, overheating them and reducing their defense abilities - all of which pose deadly ramifications for the insects.



Climate Change may be a factor in the loss of Dragonfly Wing Color

Cont...

Mr Moore likens it to wearing black clothing on a sunny, hot day: it's going to make you feel hotter. The findings, however, only apply to male dragonflies. Female dragonflies respond less to climate changes, and when they do, it's usually the opposite way as male dragonflies. The reason, Mr Moore says, remains unknown.

"We don't yet know what's driving these evolutionary changes in female wing coloration," he said.

"But one of the very important things that this indicates is that we shouldn't assume that males and females are going to respond to climatic conditions in exactly the same way."



Scientists uncover bizarre 35-million-year-old arachnid

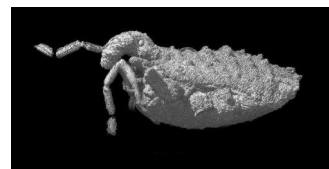
A **35-million-year-old arachnid** encased in amber is challenging what scientists thought they knew about the history of harvestmen. Found in Ukraine and the Baltic region, the fossil belongs to a group that **no longer exists in Europe**. The study, published in *Acta Palaeontologica Polonica*, documents the first fossil record of this lineage.

The species, *Balticolasma wunderlichi*, dates to the **Eocene epoch** and belongs to the subfamily *Ortholasmatinae*. This group includes some of the most structurally complex

harvestmen known today, yet none are currently found on the European continent.

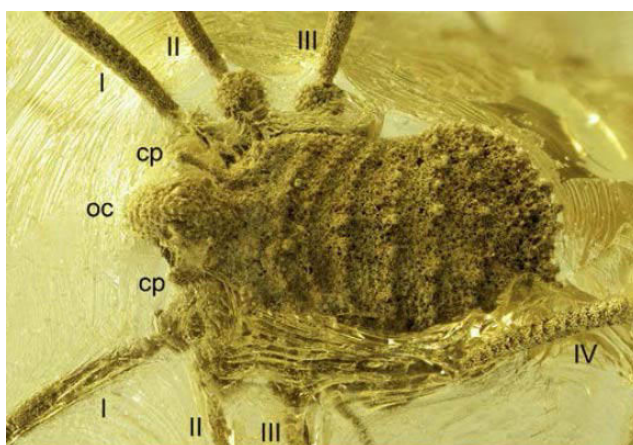
Now restricted to **East Asia** and the **Americas**, these arachnids once occupied a far wider range. The discovery suggests that their distribution across the northern hemisphere was significantly broader millions of years ago.

The new species was identified from two specimens preserved in different types of amber. One, believed to be female, comes from **Rovno amber** in northwestern Ukraine, while the other, a male, was recovered from **Baltic amber**. As explained by the researchers, both pieces were later transferred from private collections in Germany and Lithuania to the **Museum für Naturkunde Berlin**.



Cont...Two Amber Fossils, One Unexpected Presence

This geographic separation suggests the species was not confined to a single location. According to paleontologist **Christian Bartel**: “the discovery of an ortholasmatine harvestman in European amber deposits surprised us,” a reaction tied to the absence of this group in modern European ecosystems.



Cont...A Remarkably Intricate Ancient Arachnid

Members of the *Ortholasmatinae* are known for their elaborate morphology. As noted by the study, only **seven living genera with 27 described species** are currently recognized, all showing a disjunct distribution.

Using **synchrotron microtomography**, researchers reconstructed its anatomy in detail. The scans revealed a body measuring less than **3 millimeters**, flattened and covered with rows of tubercles, along

with a forward-projecting, hood-like structure; features consistent with modern relatives.

The discovery points to a significantly wider historical range for this group. As explained by *Bartel*, it highlighted how much their distribution has narrowed over time.

“Relatives of these animals are currently found only in East Asia as well as in North and Central America.”

He added that: “evidently, 35 million years ago, during the Eocene epoch, these harvestmen were much more widely distributed across the northern hemisphere than they are today.



This fossil captures a time when this lineage was still present in European ecosystems, before vanishing from the region.

An Expo Exhibitor Story - Deathly Delicate

Hey! I'm Lillee, the crazy bug lady behind Deathly Delicate.

During covid I taught myself how to pin insects and instantly fell in love with the process.

I started Deathly Delicate in 2021 as a passion project to create pieces for my own collection which quickly grew into creating pieces for friends and family then into markets and exposition appearances and being in physical stores.

I never thought a girl with her love for bugs would get this far.

Each piece from Deathly Delicate is hand created by me, with sustainably sourced specimens from suppliers all over the world.

When I'm not creating in the studio, I'm working full time in the water industry or spending time with my husband and two dogs. For more about Deathly Delicate, please see my web and social pages here:

<https://www.facebook.com/deathlydelicate/>

<https://deathlydelicate.square.site/>

<https://www.instagram.com/deathlydelicate/>



Lillee creates works of both imagination and uniqueness. Every piece is an individual art piece.

cont...



Some of the works from Deathly Delicate which will be on show at this years National Insect Expo.

Institute Pioneers - Ms Eleanor Mahon

The influence of Eleanor Mahon on the National Institute of Entomology is still being felt after many years.

She first began her association with our organisation back in the early nineties when we were still operating out of Heathcote as the Insectarium of Victoria.

Her assistance at the centre included curation of specimens, setting up our very first Windows PC for administration work (running Windows 3.11!!), accounting,

setting up our filing system and printers as well as assisting with animal husbandry.

She would also look after visitors at the centre. It was always a pleasure having her grace us during our humble beginnings.

A *Special Thanks* Eleanor.



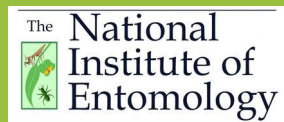
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Members Committee Opportunity

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.

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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.

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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](#).

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