Monash a key player in new neuroscience research group

By David Bruce

Neuroscientists at Monash University have joined with colleagues at other Victorian institutions to work on the debilitating effects of stroke and neuro-degenerative diseases such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and schizophrenia.

The combined assault on this range of diseases has been brought about by the creation of Neurosciences Victoria (NSV), which was launched by Premier Mr Steve Bracks last month.

The four founding partners - Monash, the University of Melbourne, the Howard Florey Institute, and the National Stroke Research Institute - plan to use NSV as a single point for negotiations with government, industry and potential investors.

The chief executive officer of NSV, Mr William Hart, said the research group would allow the many small and competing research groups currently scattered around Melbourne to draw on each other's strengths and use the NSF infrastructure for promotion and administration.

Mr Hart said that Monash, through its cross-campus Centre for Neuroscience, was a key player in the formation of NSV.

"Monash has particular strengths and expertise in Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders, as well as in neuro-pharmacology and the behavioural sciences," Mr Hart said.

"It is very important for Neurosciences Victoria to build on these strengths and make them complement the work being done by other institutions in the group."

Monash would also benefit from additional funds flowing from the NSV group into its animal behaviour laboratories, which would become a resource for all the partners in the group.

NSV will assist several Monash research projects undertaken by Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences staff, including Professor Malcolm Horne, Professor Phil Beart, Dr Surindar Cheema, Professor Bevyn Jarrott and Professor Elsdon Storey.

In launching NSV, Mr Bracks announced that the German drug company Schering AG had pledged $25 million over five years to fund research at NSV on a range of neurological conditions.

Playing around: Mr Andrew Iwaniuk with models of the brains of various animals. Picture: GREG FORD

Bigger brains mean more playtime study

By Corey Nasser

Bigger-brained animals are more likely to play, according to Monash University researchers.

Scientists in the Department of Biological Sciences have published a paper supporting the theory that varying brain size appears related to the amount of play that each group does.

According to Mr Andrew Iwaniuk, a PhD researcher and co-author of the paper, 'Big-brained animals play more'. Comparative analyses of play and relative brain size in mammals, animals play as a means of practising behaviour that they will engage in later in life.

"There are a number of popular theories as to why animals play, but our data suggests that they are most likely practising behaviours for future events, much like a human infant does when playing 'house' or 'school'," Mr Iwaniuk said.

"Some scientists believe animals play as a means of expending excess energy and others see it as a process to assist muscle coordination and nervous system growth, but our paper disagrees with both of those theories."

Mr Iwaniuk admits that one of the biggest problems people encounter when doing this type of research is defining 'play'.

"It is generally accepted that play is any kind of behavior that doesn't appear to have an immediate function and is usually highly variable in its duration, complexity and frequency," he said.

"Play doesn't necessarily have an immediate value to the species engaged in the act, but it is likely to serve an ultimate goal within the animal's lifetime."

The study, which covered rodents, marsupials and primates, allowed the researchers to make within-order comparisons rather than comparing highly varying species.

"The prevalence and complexity of play was significantly shown to be correlated with brain size, with the larger brained orders having more playful species," Mr Iwaniuk said.

However, while a certain brain size is needed to play, he said that just having a big brain doesn't mean that a species will play.

"Our findings suggest that how the brain develops may be more critical for the expression of play than simply how big the brain is," he said.

Continued on page 2
Monash showcases biomedical research on world stage

BY DAVID WARD AND JUNE YU

The Monash Institute of Health (MIH) will hold a series of forums for selected Australian and international venture capital groups later this year to attract investors for its biomedical research. The forums are the result of discussions at the recent international biotechnology conference in San Diego, California, and will enable potential investors to examine the breadth of research across the MIH biomedical spectrum.

The Bio2001 conference, attended by Victorian Premier Mr Steve Bracks and State and Regional Development Minister Mr John Brumby, attracted about 16,000 delegates, making it the largest biotechnology conference in the world. Monash decided to take part to showcase the range of its research and its potential for commercialisation, he said.

"This is an excellent opportunity for us to showcase our expertise and capabilities and to look for new partnerships and opportunities," Professor Nick Saunders said. "The benefits that flow from one include excellent education, research and training facilities for our students and staff and the ability to ensure that Australia reaps the rewards from its own research, with subsequent economic benefits and employment opportunities." Other developments at Bio2001 included:

- the announcement that a national synchrotron facility would be built at Monash University;
- the announcement by Monash startup company ESI International that it was ready to provide stem cells for the international market through its collaboration with researchers in Singapore and Israel; and
- new opportunities for two Monash startup businesses, CopyRat and Ingenio, to provide gene technology related to rabbits and mice to international companies, particularly in North America.

The MIH delegation at Bio2001 included representatives from the Monash Institute of Reproduction and Development, the Monash Research Cluster for Biomedicine, the Baker Medical Research Institute, and Prince Henry's Institute of Medical Research.

For further information, contact Mr David Ward on +61 3 9905 9871, or visit www.monashinstitutes.org.

New forensic institute launched

Continued from page 1

Professor Hampel's colleagues at the new institute, including its vice-president, Professor Ian McSherry, Associate Professor Bernadette McInerney and Mr Jonathan Cough, also attended the launch.

Researching how sophisticated legal systems handle expert evidence is among its early projects. One of the catalysts for the institute was the result of a survey of Australia's judiciary in which significant criticisms were made of expert witnesses and the way they advocate to defend experts, Professor Hampel said. "The main driving advocates in the royal commission on expert evidence is an example of a legal education system for forensic science," said Professor Ian McSherry, Professor Hampel's colleague at the new institute. "We want to develop a better understanding of how to present evidence in a clear, understandable way. We want to help people to communicate their findings. The tribunal can then make a better determination," he said.

In future years, Professor Hampel hopes the Institute of Forensic Studies will help streamline court processes by improving presentations of expert witness evidence. This would result in more reliable evidence, which in turn could reduce the overall length of complex trials. The institute's activities are already well advanced. Its first international conference is planned at Monash's centre in Praha, Italy, next year and it is developing a Postgraduate Certificate in Forensic Studies for accountants. Professor Hampel already has his sights set on future research such as the function of jurors and the development of practical judicial training.

Dr Ian Lewis with Rameses II

The breakthrough provides new opportunities for the artificial breeding cooperative Genetics Australia, says the birth of the cloned calf was significant for both the dairy and beef industries. A clone of a once-elite Canadian bull was born last year. However, Rameses II is the first clone from a bull that is currently among the elite of dairy bulls in the country's population. "This is a great opportunity for us. The technology which will provide new opportunities for the genetic improvement of livestock and help improve the competitiveness of our dairy and beef industries," Mr Hartfield said.

"On this occasion, we used cells from the ear of Rameses to produce the clone," he said. The gestation went according to plan, and Rameses II was delivered by normal birth, Dr Hartfield said. Rameses II was produced from only three entries transfers - a high level of efficiency and comparable to the efficiency of artificial insemination.

Improve literacy online

Researchers from Monash University and the Northern Metropolitan Institute of TAFE (NMIMT) are undertaking a $258,000 study aimed at improving online literacy for people with disabilities.

"We've focused on interests such as online dictionary," Ms Stockfeld said. "We're learning that the literacy levels among people with disabilities vary greatly. We aim to create models of web design which meet literacy needs, including content, organisation, navigation and structure, taking into consideration the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative guidelines."

Participants in the study were asked about ways to improve the access to online information, and their responses were used to design prototype web pages that are currently being tested.

"The prototype web pages include a new add-on which links to an online dictionary," Ms Stockfeld said. "This displays a syllable breakdown of the word, an audio file of the spoken word, a picture describing the word and an example of the context use of the word."

She said people with disabilities or people from the deaf community often have competing needs for people with disabilities and people who are currently studying at NMIMT. Ms Stockfeld said the disability rates among students, researchers and experts are significantly higher than the national average. The study involves interviewing people with disabilities, and people learn through different methods. "It will include the development of NetGloss for designing web pages, including content, organisation, navigation and structure, taking into consideration the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative guidelines," Mr Stockfeld said.

For more information about the study, contact Ms Stockfeld on +61 3 5902 2322.
Women disadvantaged in family law decisions

BY KAY ANSELL

Family law decisions often short­change women — and not just prop­erty distribution, according to Monash law researcher Dr Kay Ansell. A senior lecturer in Monash's Law faculty and a deputy registrar at the Family Court, Dr Ansell said her PhD research revealed that men and women are disadvantaged in family law decision-making in Australia, examined the dispute reso­lution procedures in court through lin­guistic as well as in mediation.

She discovered that women are dis­advantaged by a reinforcement of traditional gender stereotypes in both cases.

Dr Ansell said women suffered much for the gains they appeared to make from family law decisions — typically being awarded more than half in a property settlement as well as custody of children in most cases.

Her research found that women are disadvantaged in a range of ways under the in-built ideologies that reflect and reinforce traditional roles for women.

"In family law cases, women are more likely to win custody of their kids if they comply with the traditional gender-determined role of being a good mother and a good wife," Dr Ansell said.

"But if they deviate in terms of lead­ing the family or trying to juggle work and home or forming a new relation­ship or changing their sexual prefer­ences, they're more likely to lose."

If a man seeking custody also has a full-time job that means his children need to be in childcare, a court may view his situation favourably, as he attempts to maintain a standard of liv­ing. But a woman in the same situation could be seen as "dumping the kids" for a career, Dr Ansell said.

In about two-thirds of cases, women win custody. "But they win for what I say are the wrong reasons — only if they come up to scratch on what a 'good mother' should be."

Similarly, when it comes to prop­erty, women's unpaid work as mothers and the employment opportunities (and income) they forego are not fact­ored into the settlement, she says.

Nor is the impact on women's domes­tic violence, which can restrict future­ly ability to work. Dr Ansell suggests the Act be changed to take account of these factors.

For custody of children, the inter­pretation of the law needs to be exam­ined, she believes, because while the Act gives wide judicial discretion, judges need to be made aware of gen­der issues in exercising that discretion.

As well, she proposes mandatory training for judges "as a strategy, not a solution", and a watchdog to provide greater overall scrutiny of judges.

Female killers more cold­­blooded by necessity: study

BY ALLISON HARDING

Women killers are often seen as more "cold-blooded" than their male counter­parts, according to a study by Monash's School of Political and Social Inquiry.

In her PhD research, Ms Deborah Kirkwood found that women who killed tended to be seen as highly deviant because they departed from stereotyped notions of women and femininity.


Ms Kirkwood said the popular view was that partners were the main vic­tims of women murderers. But her research revealed significant numbers of women killed their children or friends and acquaintances.

"It's often presumed that women don't kill, or when they do, they kill their partners, so I was quite surprised there was such a large number of women who killed a person outside their family," she said.

"And I also found that when women did kill their partners it was almost always in response to abuse."

Ms Kirkwood said that women who killed their children were usually in high-stress circumstances with no sup­port. Nearly 40 per cent of the horri­fied were of partners, and nearly 20 per cent of children.

Ms Kirkwood said that while killings by men are often seen as crimes of passion (where there is a loss of control), women might need to plan a killing or enlist the support of others, such as family members, to kill a violent husband and father. The legal sys­tem then viewed the woman's crime as more "cold-blooded".

"The legal system needs to consid­er the context in which women's vio­lent actions occur. Because women have more practical and emotional res­ponsibility with using violence, they may not be able to act immediately to threat or provocation," she said.

In the situation where women kill violent partners, she continued, it was "to consider the history of the relationship and its impact on the woman."

"Our laws are modelled on maleMuch less often than men's because it is highly stigmatised."

As well, she proposes mandatory training for judges "as a strategy, not a solution" and a watchdog to provide greater overall scrutiny of judges.

Green chemistry initiative launched

The Monash Centre for Green Chemistry will help Australian and international industries create cleaner and more sustainable future.

Launched by Senator Kay Patterson, the centre is funded by the Australian Research Council to aid research at the cutting edge of green chemistry.

Ms Patterson said researchers using hazard-free methods to produce safe, clean and energy-efficient products, often through redesigning the processes involved.

"The centre will also partner with international industries to translate research into practice," she said.

Pre-implantation test for Down syndrome

The Monash Institute of Reproduction and Development scientists have developed a reliable DNA test to detect Down syn­drome in embryos before they are implanted in a woman's womb during IVF treatment.

This DNA fingerprinting test can be combined with existing tests for inher­ited disorders involving defects in single genes, such as cystic fibrosis.

The test will help women who are trying to have children, particularly those in their late 30's and older who have an increased risk of producing embryos with genetic abnormalities.

Monash Open Day

Monash Open Day 2001 will offer prospective students and visitors to the university the opportunity to explore Monash's six Victorian campuses.

Held on the weekend of 4 and 5 August, Monash Open Day will highlight facilities and courses on offer at the university.
Students look to their mobiles for results

BY DEREK BROWN

A group of Monash students received their results in the form of a text message on their mobile phones last month.

The revolutionary system was tested on 1000 students, who responded to an advertisement for the trial on the monash portal, the Monash intranet system available to students. The system was rolled out within two days of its announcement.

Deputy vice-chancellor (Resources) Mr Alson Crook said the new system gave students more choice in service delivery.

"This is one of a range of initiatives we are introducing," he said.

Project manager of Flexible Learning and Teaching in ITS Mr Ron Sawyer said the system increased convenience for students.

"Listening to our students, we realised how important their results were to them. This trial is a step towards delivering this information in a way that is relevant to students and that is more efficient for the university," he said.

Students were posting feedback about the trial through the monash portal within an hour of results being sent to their mobile phones.

Although formal evaluation is yet to be undertaken, students commented so far have been overwhelmingly supportive.

Mr Alan McMeekin, executive director of IT Services, said the project was an exciting example of innovation at the university.

"Monash prides itself on being a cutting-edge institution, and our IT division is happy to collaborate with other university service areas to experiment and push the technical boundaries if it can help our students and staff," he said.

Monash hi-tech equipment for Japanese synchrotron

BY SUE MCAULIFER

A low-pressure vacuum chamber, designed and built by Monash University, is being installed at the world’s most powerful synchrotron.

Dr Andrei Nikulin from Monash’s School of Physics and Materials Engineering says the chamber, which he is taking to Japan this month, will bear the engraved words monash, ruemond and the logo for Monash University.

When installed at the Super Photon Ring-8 synchrotron, the chamber will sit among cutting-edge equipment created and used by the giants of Japanese industry, along with government and private scientific and technological research institutions from Japan and elsewhere around the globe.

Japan’s prestigious Institute for Physical and Chemical Research, KEK, runs the facility jointly with the giant of Japanese industry, along with government and private scientific and technological research institutions from Japan and elsewhere around the globe.

Japan’s prestigious Institute for Physical and Chemical Research, KEK, runs the facility jointly with the Japanese Synchrotron Radiation Institute, JASRI.

A synchrotron is a circular particle accelerator that functions essentially as microscopes billions of times more powerful than conventional ones. They permit scientists to see things down to the atomic and sub-atomic level.

"The Monash-built chamber will permit much better quality data to be collected from photons being accelerated by the SPring-8 synchrotron," Dr Nikulin said.

"Air is removed from the chamber as it’s a gas and therefore scatters photons passing through it, making measurements inaccurate. The effect of the air and other inhomogeneous features of the chamber is removed so photons passing through it are more accurately measured. Consequently, for an accelerator as powerful as the SPring-8, the removal of air is exceptionally important. It allows sample detectors and other equipment in the chamber to take measurements which are many orders of magnitude more precise than would otherwise be possible, permitting almost error-free analysis."

In addition to the chamber "flying the flag" for Monash, Dr Nikulin says having Australian-designed and constructed hi-tech equipment in use at such a world-class research facility is a milestone for Australian science as a whole.

Dr Nikulin says the experience gained from this and other projects Monash is involved in with KEK at the SPring-8 will be of great benefit in developing Australia’s first synchrotron.

"The Japanese have lots of synchrotrons, "Dr Nikulin said. "but this one is what you might call top-of-the-range -- the biggest there is. It functions as a huge national laboratory."

The low-pressure vacuum chamber project was funded by a Monash University Small Grant.
The selection of highlights was based on what the producers believed constituted a storyline out of the banality that makes up much of daily life. What was screened then had a narrative imposed upon it which was lifted out of the jungle and minidane of lived experience. Add to this the element of ‘performing to the gallery’, and the participants’ complicity in the voyeuristic relationship which the audience entered into in plainly visible. This Nicole Ridenour’s character in To Die For, the ‘Big Brother’ participants were paradoxically driven by the belief that you’re not a ‘real person’ until you’ve been on television. Their behaviour was not spontaneous but self-scripted – they were inevitably aware of themselves as characters on a stage. ‘Big Brother’ was therefore two parts soap opera, one-part real life. The banality of much of the dialogue and the (in)action – long sequences of people sprawled on beds, doing very little – was an artefact which fueled the illusion of real life.

In ‘Big Brother’, the audience was invited into an intimate relationship with the occupants – a relationship which was more intense than an encounter with soapie characters, because these ‘real’ people became de facto members of the audience’s peer group. One addict said they ‘felt like they knew them’, never missing an episode. Her friends all watched it, and they talked about it among themselves. ‘Big Brother’ also owed its success to its investment of power in the audience to act as judge and jury.

The weekly plebiscite allowed viewers to analyse, judge, psychoanalyse and ity that makes up much of daily life. The show seemed to invite us to make our own moral judgements about Sara-Marie, Johnnie and the rest – to analyse, judge, psychoanalyse and make comparisons; in short, to function as active audience members. But ‘Big Brother’ did not present us with unlimited access to the behaviour of these ‘real people’ – the television audience of ‘Big Brother’ didn’t get to ‘perv’ unrestrainedly at the household occupants until the last person was eliminated.

The answer lies partly in the wide publicity given to the show through different promotion strategies. But more importantly, the show’s success can be traced to the kind of interpretations and associations that members of the audience were invited to make. ‘Big Brother’ appeared to hold up a mirror to everyday life, allowing us to become spectators at a human zoo. The show seemed to invite us to make our own moral judgements about Sara-Marie, Johnnie and the rest – to analyse, judge, psychoanalyse and make comparisons; in short, to function as active audience members. But ‘Big Brother’ did not present us with unlimited access to the behaviour of these ‘real people’ – the television audience of ‘Big Brother’ didn’t get to ‘perv’ unrestrainedly at the household occupants, making the zoo analogy in this respect misleading.

Instead, we were served up edited highlights, selected by the producers, from the mass of footage gained every week. The selection of highlights was based on what the producers believed constituted a storyline out of the banality that makes up much of daily life. What was screened then had a narrative imposed upon it which was lifted out of the jungle and minidane of lived experience. Add to this the element of ‘performing to the gallery’, and the participants’ complicity in the audience to act as judge and jury. Viewers were invited to lodge a vote against a participant, on the internet or by telephone, resulting in the expulsion of one member from the ‘Big Brother’ house each week. Could it be argued that this weak election was functioning to train audience members in the literacies relevant to citizens in a participatory democracy.

But far from advancing these relationships, ‘Big Brother’ offered to audience members, then, was not only permission to be voyeurs but also the opportunity to play the roles of social observer, moral arbiter, judge and jury, and to belong to a new social peer group. It also offered, at least, the illusion that these relationships were more ‘real’ than the ones we enter into with the characters of, say, Dawson’s Creek – and that what we say and think about what we do, somehow matters.

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The weekly plebiscite allowed viewers direct participation, affecting the outcome of the show. Viewers were invited to lodge a vote against a participant, on the internet or by telephone, resulting in the expulsion of one member from the ‘Big Brother’ house each week. It could be argued that this weekly election was functioning to train audience members in the literacies relevant to citizens in a participatory democracy. But ‘Big Brother’ offered to audience members, then, was not only permission to be voyeurs but also the opportunity to play the roles of social observer, moral arbiter, judge and jury, and to belong to a new social peer group. It also offered, at least, the illusion that these relationships were more ‘real’ than the ones we enter into with the characters of, say, Dawson’s Creek – and that what we say and think about what we do, somehow matters.

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Elegance and balance the hallmark of artist's work

BY JOHN CLARK

In late 1981, artist Fred Williams turned over one of his works and inscribed "My Best Painting." The elegant and finely balanced work, "Forest of Gum Trees III," is one of Williams' most iconic landscapes. He dedicated himself to the art form, and his commitment is evident in the work's composition and detail.

According to his wife, Lyn Williams, the work expresses a love of the Australian landscape. "Along with artists such as Arthur Streeton and Sidney Nolan, he is one of Australia's great landscape painters," she said.

One of the most prominent features of "Forest of Gum Trees III" is the sense of landscape imagery and the attention to detail. The work is a testament to Williams' dedication to his craft and his ability to capture the essence of the Australian landscape.

The Melbourne Architectural Exhibition

In Melbourne, the Faculty of Art and Design Gallery has selected 15 works from the artist's estate for an exhibition titled "Fred Williams: Landscapes 1959-1981." The exhibition, which opens on 24 August, will run until 22 September.

The works in the exhibition have been carefully curated by the artist's widow, Lyn Williams, in conjunction with the gallery curators. The exhibition is an opportunity for visitors to experience the full range of Williams' work and appreciate the evolution of his style over his lifetime.

Tickets are $22 (full), $12 (concession), and $10 (group). Bookings: 61 3 9651 8624.

New book honours Melbourne's PMs

BY DEREK BROWN

For more than 36 years, Melbourne has been the seat of government and the capital city of Australia. In a new book commissioned by the Victorian Parliament, Professor Brian Costar has profiled each of the eight prime ministers who were in office when the Parliament sat in Melbourne.

The Melbourne Prime Ministers 1901-1927, reveals strong links between the leaders, despite their political and philosophical differences. "In writing the entries, it struck me that there was a characteristic common to all the early prime ministers - although they were all Empire men, they weren't prepared to let England lead them, particularly in relation to foreign policy," he said.

The leaders of the Parliament came from positions high up in colonial politics and the federation movement. They made the shift from politics of ethnicity to politics of nation. The change was dramatic.

Limited free copies of The Melbourne Prime Ministers are available from the Parliament of Victoria. To obtain a copy, contact Ms Karen Dowling on 61 3 9651 8624.
By JUNEYU

Prize for environmentally responsible investment

By JUNEYU

By JUNEYU

By JUNEYU

By JUNEYU

By JUNEYU

In 1961, 363 students arrived at a new university in Melbourne's south-east. Today, more than 44,000 people are studying at Monash University. We look back through the years.

"This knowledge not only facilitates the integration of Malaysian students into the university community, it is also being used by Australian businesses seeking to create ties with Malaysia," he said.

"It is envisaged that the information superhighway, or global information infrastructure, will include high-speed interactive networks connecting businesses, governments and individuals."

Professor Tucker said the challenge for international bodies was to determine whether governments, corporations or individuals should be responsible to monitor worldwide universities. "A Clinical Approach"

"So far, the fund has attracted $50 million in investments from leading superannuation funds, HESTA, UniSuper and Australia's largest major, AMP."

"We have had inquiries from other private investors."

This book covers the essential knowledge of infectious diseases necessary for medical students, junior doctors and general practitioners. The text includes chapters written by a number of Monash academics including Associate Professor John Spicer, Associate Professor Denis Spelman, Professor Steven Wessell, Dr Olga Vojovic and Dr Andrew Fuller from the Department of Microbiology, Dr Tony Korman, Dr Michael Oldmeadow and Dr Alexander Pedgheine from the Monash Medical Centre, and Associate Professor Jennifer Ray, Professor Suzanne Crowe and Dr Hugh Newton-John from the Department of Medicine.

as we enter the 21st century, the greatest threat to human health and our species is the same as it was a century ago infectious diseases. Written with contributions from 42 infectious diseases experts, this book covers the essential knowledge of infectious diseases necessary for medical students, junior doctors and general practitioners. The text includes chapters written by a number of Monash academics including Associate Professor John Spicer, Associate Professor Denis Spelman, Professor Steven Wessell, Dr Olga Vojovic and Dr Andrew Fuller from the Department of Microbiology, Dr Tony Korman, Dr Michael Oldmeadow and Dr Alexander Pedgheine from the Monash Medical Centre, and Associate Professor Jennifer Ray, Professor Suzanne Crowe and Dr Hugh Newton-John from the Department of Medicine.

Writings on an Ethical Life is a collection of Singer's best and most controversial essays. Chosen by the author himself, the collection provides an in-depth insight into Singer's philosophy. Professor Singer is the author of Animal Liberation, Practical Ethics, and Refashioning Life and Death. He is currently professor of bioethics at Princeton University.

Books featured in 'Inprint' are available or can be ordered at Monash's four on-campus bookshops.

- CITSU ( Caulfield) + 61 3 9571 3277 • Clayton + 61 3 9905 3111
- Gippsland + 61 3 5122 1771 • Peninsula + 61 3 9783 6932

www.monash.edu.au
Gippsland wildlife efforts rewarded

BY MARK EMMONSON

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) has awarded Monash Gippsland 'Land for Wildlife' status in recognition of the university's efforts in revegetating areas of the campus over the past four years.

Land for Wildlife is a voluntary program that recognises efforts being made to conserve biodiversity on private land.

Gippsland pro vice-chancellor Professor Brian Mackenzie was presented last month with a special sign to present by a long period of growth. Monash Gippsland has been awarded 'Land for Wildlife' status.

One area on campus adjacent to an established land corridor along Lawless Road has been revegetated to encourage wildlife into the campus. And native species have been planted on golf course fairways to facilitate the movement of animals through the campus.

Windbreaks have been established along fences lines and an 800 metre section of Bennetts Creek has been revegetated on land neighbouring the campus.

In addition, a narrow 1.5 kilometre corridor of vegetation has been established along the northern boundary to link Bennetts Creek to Matheson Park and Lake Hyland. Additional plantings designed to complement the existing works will occur over the next two years.

For more information about the 'Land for Wildlife' scheme, contact Professor Mackenzie on +61 3 5139105.

Australian crisis in ‘knowledge investment’ jeopardises future growth

BY STEUART HAYTHUR

Australia is facing a crisis in education, research and development - with immediate negative economic effects and great risks for the nation's future.

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