



The inferno in Australia

By Zach Dickerson
Editor in Chief

With a combination of record breaking temperatures and months of severe drought, the massive bushfires of Australia that have been burning since September continue to intensify and rage on.

So far, many towns have been evacuated (many of these towns being totally destroyed with 2,000 homes gone), at least 25 people have been killed, an estimated one billion animals have been killed and 15.6 million acres have burned (roughly the size of West Virginia).

One of the states that has been affected the worst is New South Wales, located on the lower east coast of the country, where fires have burned roughly 12.4 million acres and destroyed 1,300 homes. As of Monday, Jan. 6, about 130 fires were burning across the state in the bush, mountain forests and national parks.

Billions of animals that are unique to Australia

are also dying or at risk. In New South Wales alone, a third of their koala population have died and a third of their habitat destroyed as well, according to federal environmental minister Sussan Ley in December.

Other animals that have been greatly affected are wombats, who can't cope with heat or stress and panic at the smell of smoke, as well as kangaroos and many other native animals.

Both officials and even regular citizens are desperately working to save, protect, care for and rehabilitate all of these animals. But these fires are obliterating Australia's iconic ecosystem.

Once fires have started, other areas are at risk, with embers blown by the wind causing blazes to spread to new areas. Bush fires themselves can also drive thunderstorms, increasing the risk of lightning strikes and further fires.

While the fires have been traced back to being started either by lightning strikes or people, either through accident or deliberately committing arson (with some people currently

in custody), scientists have stated that climate change is a big proponent to why the fires are so massive and spreading like they are.

Hot, dry weather combined with a long drought period and strong winds have created the perfect conditions for the fire to spread rapidly. According to the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, "Climate change is increasing the bushfire risk in Australia by lengthening the fire season, decreasing precipitation and increasing temperature."

2019 was also both the hottest and driest year ever measured in Australia, according to the Bureau of Meteorology, with December being one of the top two hottest months on record.

Also, according to Climate Signals, while climate change might not ignite the fires, it is giving them the chance to turn into catastrophic blazes by creating warmer temperatures, increasing the amount of fuel (dried vegetation) available and reducing water availability because of higher evaporation.

While Australia is no stranger to drought, climate change has worsened drought conditions so that when droughts occur, the conditions are in a much hotter climate and, in some cases, with lower precipitation, according to Climate Signals.

The Climate Reality Project also reports that making the connection between global temperature rise and wildfires is also pretty simple science. As droughts dry out the land, killing plant life, which then also dries out itself, becoming far easier to ignite.

Professional firefighters in Australia and thousands of volunteers are working to combat the flames, as well as firefighters from other countries such as the United States, Canada and New Zealand. Australia's police, military and navy are also working on rescue and evacuation efforts.

The firefighters are working to combat the flames by spraying water and fire retardant from planes, helicopters and from the ground. But because the fires are extremely difficult to fight, authorities often have to turn to just stopping the spread of the flames rather than putting them out.

They work to contain the spread by digging earth boundaries to stop them. The main priority is to work on saving lives.



This photo of a kangaroo near a burning home in New South Wales, Australia by New York Times photographer Matthew Abbott has come to symbolize the destruction wrought by the wildfires in Australia. Taken in the middle of the day Dec. 31, it appeared in the Times and has since been shared widely in social media, even garnering more than 2 million likes on the Instagram page of Greta Thunberg, the teenage climate and environmental activist who was named Time magazine's 2019 Person of the Year last month.

The Nicobar Pigeon

By Solomon Turner
Contributor

According to the Rosamond Gifford Zoo and the World Wildlife Fund of India, these resplendent birds are native to the tropical region that includes the Islands of Nicobar, Indonesia and New Guinea along with other islands in the region.

These eye-catching birds are classified as Near Threatened according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s Red List. They are medium sized birds that are around 16 inches in length and one pound in weight.

The male and female sex both have a grey chest and head along with short, pure white tail feathers. Their wings, back and neck feathers are a vivid metallic coloration.

Around their neck, their feathers are long and hair-like and form a distinctive mane. They have hooked beaks and the males have a small black knob at the base of their beak.

Their behavior is nomadic as a result of their island habitat. Generally, they are most active at dawn and dusk when they commute between forested islands devoid of human activity in flocks of up to 85 birds. When they vocalize, they “coo” like the pigeons we are accustomed to in the States, but when they display aggression, they grunt like pigs.

The males will court females for several days, searching for their lifelong mates. The male will bring a female nesting material and the female will construct a simple primitive nest.

Both parents are involved with the incubation process and care for the altricial young, lasting around two months. One month for incubation and another before the chick can care for itself.

The mated pair will rear two clutches per year, each clutch consisting of a single white egg. Their lifespan in the wild is around 15 years

while in captivity they live for around eight to 12 years.

Their diet consists of hard seeds and nuts, fruit, insects and corn in the wild, and vegetables, fruits, greens and pheasant grains when in captivity.

Conservation efforts are needed to ensure their survival as their numbers are steadily declining. This decline is due to the pet trade, logging and other human activity on their native islands and trapping for food and jewelry.

In addition to their normal characteristics these birds have a special muscular gizzard that allows them to eat nuts with very hard shells. They drink, like all other pigeons, by sticking their beaks into the water but do not tip their head back to drink like most birds. These birds are also closely related to the extinct Dodo bird.

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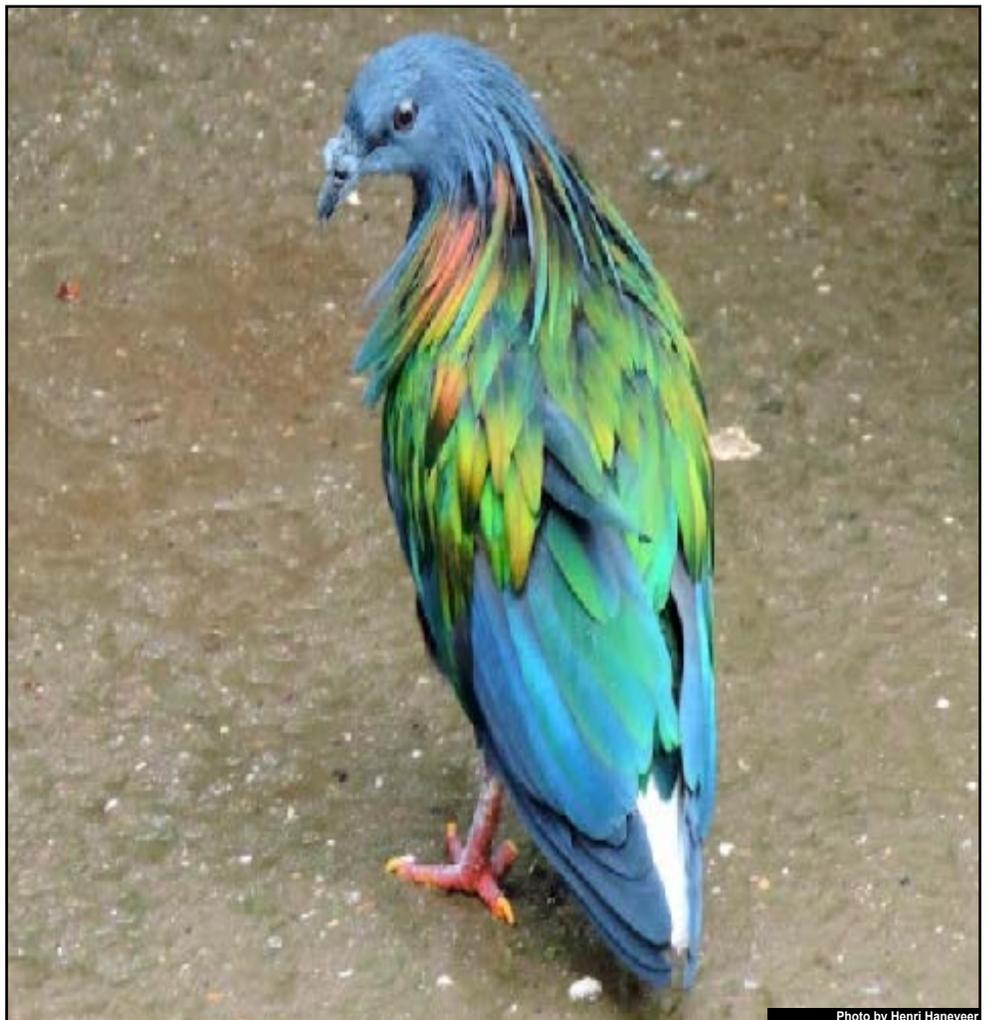


Photo by Henri Haneveer

A Nicobar pigeon

My winter break adventure

A tale of too much wine, cheese and French bread

By Margaret Correll
Layout & Design Editor

For college students, winter break is something that is almost a necessity. After the exams and the stress, students are begging for the month off.

That is exactly what I was saying when finals week came along, I needed this break like a fish needs water.

My boyfriend and former Opinion Editor for the Clarion, Florian Peyssonneaux, planned for us to visit his parents in his native country of France. We scheduled our trip to include Christmas and New Year's with a lot of time to explore and learn about his hometown.

We planned, we packed and we headed for the Asheville airport to start our international journey. I was very excited to meet most of his friends and his family for the first time. The trip was not an easy one though, several missed flights, delayed planes and losing our luggage became the highlight of our flying experience.

We made it to our final flying destination, Marseille, a wild city in southern France where his parents were waiting to pick us up. I was extremely tired from the long trip we just tackled but excited to be in a country I had never visited before.

After celebrations with his family, endless amounts of cheese, wine and the best baguettes I have ever tasted, we decided to travel in the area where he lived.

The scenery was beautiful, nothing like I had ever seen while living in North Carolina. The village was nestled in the mountains, at an altitude where fresh lavender was known to grow in large quantities. From his backyard you can see the snowy mountaintops of the French Alps.

We traveled to many places in the short two weeks that we were visiting. Places such as the

Gorges du Verdon which are home to the deepest gorge in France and to a river with water that is a beautiful emerald color.

For a few days we took a trip to the coast of France to visit some friends, this is where we explored Cannes, Nice, Eze, Monaco and traveled briefly into Italy. Talk about some rich people, the cars were insane, the scenery was breathtaking and the stores were clean and high-end.

We did some things I had never done before, we went skiing in the French Alps. My boyfriend is a champ, I on the other hand, felt like a newborn horse struggling to find my footing.

After a long stay, we had to say goodbye to our incredible trip. France was great to us and we had the most amazing time. I hope to visit again soon and take just as many amazing pictures!



Courtesy of Margaret Correll



Courtesy of Margaret Correll

Left: Margaret Correll on a ledge overlooking the Mediterranean Sea.
Right: A view of downtown Nice from Castle Hill.

Weekly Horoscopes

By Mickayla Smith
Staff Writer

Aries

There is so much to look forward to this month! However, Aries, you must develop a sense of hopeful anticipation. The new year is like a blank canvas on which you can paint absolutely anything you want. YOU have the power to do that. Some of the most important areas of your life will be affected during this month. This includes your love life, family relations and your finances. Your love life will significantly improve whether you are committed or single. Your finances should get a boost. Family relations will improve. And that's just a start. More will begin to fall into place this year, and it all starts in January.

Taurus

The tone of your year begins in January. This is a great month to get started on any ideas, vows or dreams you may have disregarded in past months. The stars are aligned to assist you in any ambitious plans you have and to put the right help and inspirations in the right spots for you. Things to focus on this month would be getting ahead at work or in business, taking time to explore a talent that you have always hoped to perfect and to begin an organized plan of your financial goals where financial security is needed. You may feel like you won't be able to do all the things you plan to do, but you are capable of anything you set your mind to. Yes, you can do this, or at least get it all started.

Gemini

The main thing you need to keep in mind this month is that this is your ship, and you are the captain at the steering wheel. You may experience a bump in the road at the beginning of January - perhaps resulting from unfinished business - you can start moving forward with your plans quickly if you wrap up old business. Your plans may include efforts to check some things off of your bucket list or explore a new place you have never been before. However, it can't be all play and no work, so you may want to think about your career or your income stream. You will accomplish most of these plans if you surround yourself with intelligent, inspirational people and remain optimistic. This month can be very productive and happy for you if you take time to focus on one thing at a time rather than scattering your thoughts and energy in many directions at once.

Cancer

Just listen to your spirit and it will guide the way. This month is meant to transform you into a stronger individual. A transformation is possible through a leadership role. You may have never expected to be put in this type of situation, but you will be surprised at how well this suits you and how talented you are at being a leader. Your peers seem to respond quite pleasantly to your leadership. This could be the beginning of a new interest in your life. Remember to live outside your comfortable mental box and expand your horizons to new and inspiring things that fill you with hope. Doing so will bring out your lust for life. In other words, plan to do things that are just for you. You tend to put obligations and other people before yourself, which should change.

Leo

You may have left a big impression on someone that you thought had no interest in you at all. This month, it may become obvious that this individual is impressed with your work and others have noticed as well. This could lead to professional developments, such as a new job opportunity or an invitation to be part of a big project that could bring you a lot of opportunities. As a mentor, you can help a person come out of their shell and shine in a special project for which you can share your experience. This process can be enjoyable for you and the person that you're assisting. There may be reignited passion between you and a lover this month, which could spice things up tremendously. Or, if you're single, someone might come on strong, and the feeling could be mutual.

Virgo

You're seeking more independence or perhaps more space from one particular relationship. This could be hard to achieve because you may be dealing with someone who is somewhat manipulative. If you stand your ground and make your demands heard, you can modify this connection to be better and healthier. Try to be more spontaneous this month, you should find that more interesting opportunities will come to you. You are at times very reserved and too cautious, and because of this, you don't get to experience much. It's important to remember that taking risks is part of life and good things can come from taking those risks.

Libra

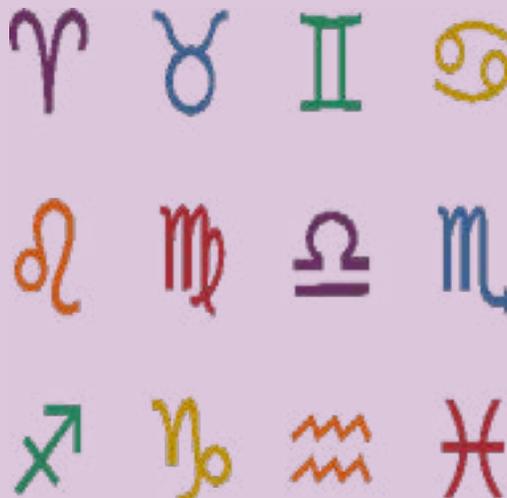
Every mistake or bad choice in life is like a brick and can be used to build a better future for yourself. If you choose to see your life this way, you will see the blessings in disguise. This month is the time to start thinking about the purpose behind situations like that mistake and to find the benefit of what happened. There is no point in punishing yourself. These mistakes allow you to grow as an individual. This month, you will reap rewards from past efforts that are impacting your life now. You may discover that a friend's unusual behavior is based on a personal metamorphosis and understanding will help you to be a great source of support.

Scorpio

You believe in reaching for what you want without explanation or apology. However, you may want to keep a big goal of yours under wraps - at least for now. Someone close to you may not understand your desire to get involved, but once they see how happy this pursuit makes you, they will open up to it. You are someone who understands the power of belief very well, but with a current venture, you need to be careful of closing your eyes to any negative elements. If you aren't realistic about a particular situation, you may not be able to see how you can protect yourself.

Sagittarius

Around the middle of the month, you may notice that your charm and allure seem to be off the charts. You may strike some attention with people that you have never thought about interacting with before. This is a great time to show off your talents. You never know who may be watching and where the next opportunity will come from. A new and



Horoscopes

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intriguing friend could appear in your life this month. You both seem to have an immediate connection. Devote some time to get to know his person, for this could be the beginning of a wonderful friendship or romance. Don't be afraid to step outside your normal crowd and talk to different people from different walks of life.

Capricorn

An authority figure in your life sometimes seems to make your life miserable on purpose. You may think this person has it out for you, but you'd be wrong. This tough love can come from admiration rather than resentment or dislike. Be grateful for it. You will become stronger and more skilled through this. The fast pace that happens this time of year has left you feeling frustrated and constantly on edge. Now since the year is coming to an end, you can finally settle down and recognize that the rush is over. Find a place to wind down and enjoy life with special friends. Doing this will put you back into shape emotionally. A friend may give you an opportunity to awaken your creative spirit. Give this a chance and you will reap the benefits.

Aquarius

The stars are urging you to open up this month and express your deeper emotions. Lately, you may have been feeling that you have been editing yourself a lot, and not just with workmates or business associates, but with the people you are closest to. Maybe you're not in the mood for deep conversations or to invite any judgments. When you open up to others, others will do the same and you will improve both communication and enjoyment of the relationship. You may learn some things that you didn't know before opening up emotionally.

Pisces

You have a persuasive kind of charm, Pisces. You can give a look, say something that expresses your desires in a most creative way. Your colorful imagination can be very convincing. This month, this talent will come in clutch. To escape January doldrums, you might want to go on an adventure and you will find the perfect companion to do just that. The only problem is that you tend to get into trouble with this person, so make sure your adventure is planned out and is fully enjoyable by not going overboard. Stay within the boundaries you draw beforehand and you will be fine.

Democratic Primaries

What's new? Who's left? When's the next debate?

By Eleanor Flannery
Staff Writer

With the U.S. 2020 presidential election just 10 months away, Democratic candidates are competing in a tight battle to become the Democratic adversary to face President Trump in November.

At one time, there were 26 Democratic candidates eager to get the ticket. As of now, with Marianne Williamson and Cory Booker suspending their campaigns in the past few days, there are only 12 hopefuls remaining. However, don't expect to see all of them on the next debate stage. Only six Democrats qualified to appear in the last debate on Tuesday, Jan. 14. Those include former Vice President Joe Biden, former Mayor of South Bend, Indiana Pete Buttigieg, Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, Sen. Bernie



Sanders of Vermont, businessman Tom Steyer and Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts. These candidates met the threshold of having at least five percent support in four qualifying opinion polls.

Voting will officially begin Feb. 3 with the Iowa caucuses, followed by the New Hampshire primary on Feb. 11, the Nevada primary on Feb. 22, and the South Carolina primary on Feb. 29.

North Carolina voters in North Carolina will get their turn to vote in either the Democratic or Republican primary on March 3.

Netflix Review

Klaus was a disappointment!

By Amber Vance
Staff Writer

Just before the holidays, Netflix added a few new films to their collection. One of which was a film acquired by Netflix titled "Klaus," directed by Sergio Pablos, creator of "Despicable Me."

The film received 30 million views within its first month after being released in early November. Despite this fact, there were aspects of the film that make it a miss.

The movie was disappointing because it took a long time for the film to catch the attention of viewers and connect with the Christmas theme. "Klaus" focused on a selfish young man whose father sends him to a town in the north where no mail has been sent in or out. The father challenges the young man to establish a working mail station and having mail incoming and outgoing within a month or he will never be able to return home.

On top of the storyline being slow, the quality of the animation was not good. It appeared like the characters had a paper mache-like quality because of how sharp the edges looked. The drawing looked choppy and a bit rushed. Many of the characters had exaggerated features such as big noses or extremely long or short limbs. With a budget of 40 million dollars one would assume that the animation would have been better.

"Klaus" deserves two out of five stars for a slow plot and poor animation. It could have been much better than what was released to the public.



Levi Lamb Joins 1,000-Point Club on Tuesday at Covenant

By Joseph Marvin

Assistant Sports Information Director

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, Ga. - Brevard College senior forward Levi Lamb became the fifth member of Brevard's NCAA-era 1,000-point club on Tuesday evening in a conference game at Covenant College.

The Atlanta native joins four other former Brevard College student-athletes to join this exclusive club - Jonathan Whitson (2007-10, 1,547 points), current BC men's basketball Assistant Coach Miles Leathers (2012-16, 1,265 points), Josh Roper (2009-11, 1,190 points), and Stevie Williams (2014-18, 1,096 points).

Levi Lamb scored his 1,000th point with a layup with 11:20 left to play in the second half. This milestone came just one game removed from the senior breaking the Brevard College NCAA-era record for career 3-pointers made on January 8 against Berea College.

The individual career milestone came on

an evening where the Tornados (3-11, 2-5 USAS) dropped a USA South Conference road matchup to division-leading Covenant (9-4, 6-0 USAS) by a final of 75-55.

Brevard was led in scoring by Demari Hopper and Cannon Lamb, who contributed double-digit scoring totals with 13 points each. Hopper drilled 6-of-7 shots from the field, while Cannon Lamb added a team-best three 3-point buckets.

Covenant's well-balanced night was led by Will Crumly who stuffed the stat sheet with 12 points, nine rebounds, three assists, and two steals. Chris Barnette added nine points and six boards for the Scots.

The first five minutes of action stayed tight before a 10-0 Covenant scoring run opened up the Scots' lead to an 18-9 advantage with 13:17 left in the first half. The Scots would extend their advantage to a 32-13 margin with 7:21 left before intermission before Brevard scored 17 of the next 23 points to trim Covenant's lead

to eight points, 38-30, at the halftime break.

The Scots jumped out quickly in the second half, scoring the first nine points to extend their lead to 47-30 to set the stage for the rest of the contest. Levi Lamb's 1,000th point cut Covenant's lead to 14 points, however, the Tornados were unable to trim the deficit further and fell by a 20-point margin.

Brevard will conclude its three-game road stretch by facing Pfeiffer University (7-6, 2-3 USAS) on Saturday, January 18 at 4 p.m. in Misenheimer, North Carolina.

To follow the latest news and updates surrounding Brevard College Athletics, follow the Tornados on Twitter and Instagram @bctornados, subscribe to 'Brevard College Tornados' on YouTube, follow 'Brevard College Tornados' on SoundCloud, or like 'Brevard College Athletics' on Facebook. In addition, follow "brevardcollege" on Flickr for the latest photos from all Brevard College events.



Courtesy of Covenant College

Levi Lamb became the fifth member of Brevard's NCAA-era 1,000-point club on Tuesday at Covenant.