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For the love of bugs

By AMY BLOM

Otto Mueller has been fascinated by nature since he was 15 and next week the insect expert will share his knowledge with a guided tour through the Brixton Street wetlands.

Mr Mueller's experience in insects included his discovery of an endangered bee species called the megamouth bee in Forrestdale bushland in 2010 in his capacity as a WA museum volunteer.

He was also the former president of the WA insect study society and was a life member of the WA naturalists club.

He began volunteering for the WA museum as an insect curator in 1998.

Mr Mueller said his interest in nature began with bird watching while he was a teenager living in World War II Germany.

"At the time I had a mentor from the local museum who had binoculars, which in civilian hands were considered to be very suspicious at the end of the war and you weren't meant to have them," he said.

"We used to go out and look at local and migratory birds and that's how my interest in nature developed."

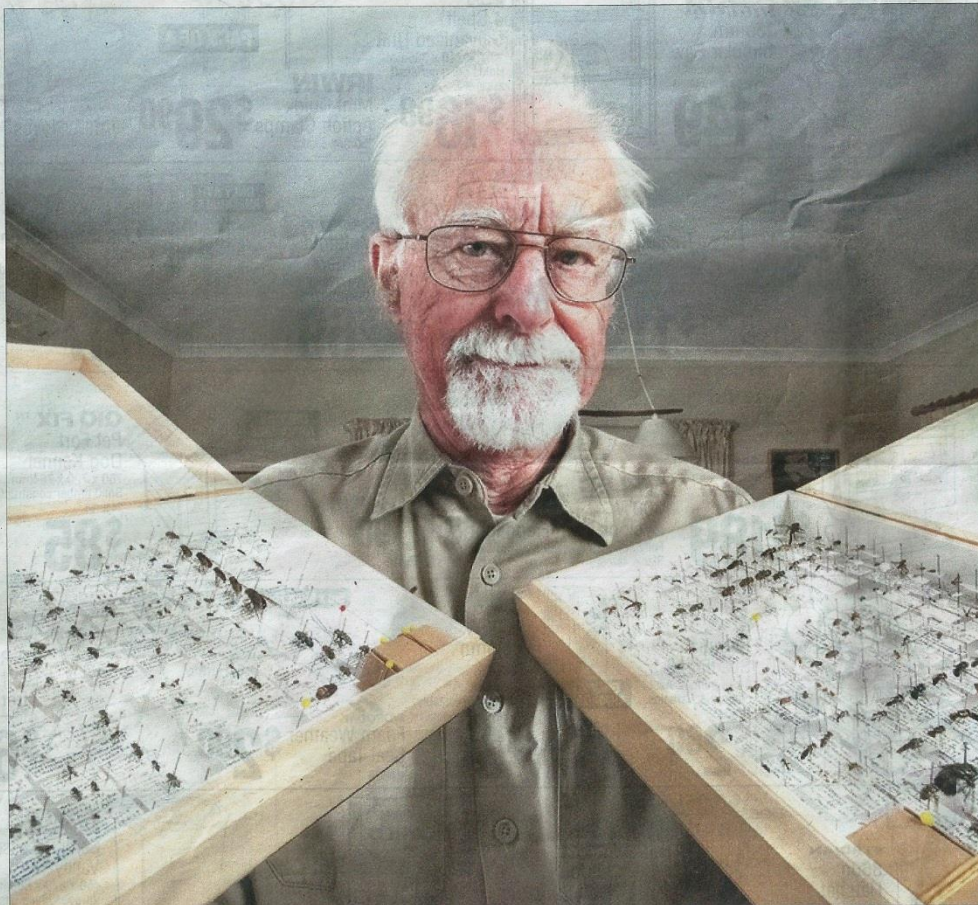
Mr Mueller said his focus shifted to insects because people considered them to be a nuisance even though they were an essential part of the eco-system.

"You look at bees and people think they are nuisance but they pollinate plants including our food sources so without them we wouldn't be able to feed our population," he said.

Mr Mueller said he hoped to share his interest and knowledge on the tour.

Walk with insects

The free guided walk and talk with Mr Mueller will be held on June 17 from 9am to 11am. Meet in Alton Street, Kenwick. Morning tea provided. For more information or to book a spot call 9459 2964.



Otto Mueller had collected a number of insect specimens. Photograph — Matt Devlin.