

MEETING

The first meeting for 1957 will be held at the Tasmanian Museum on Thursday, 21st February, at 8.00 p.m. It will be the Annual General Meeting at which office bearers and committee members will be elected for the current year. The Presidential address will be given by Mr A. M. Hewer.

PERSONAL

We are delighted to welcome back Mr Alan Brownell after his long illness. X X X Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Frank Taylor on their marriage. X X X Welcome home to Mr and Mrs Luckman after their trip to Mexico and the United States. We hope to hear all about it at a Club meeting soon.

We would like to quote from Lady Binney's foreword to the 1951 "Tasmanian Naturalist" - "There is nothing that gives greater pleasure all through life than being on friendly and intelligent terms with the flora and fauna of one's own homeland."

Kelsey Aves,
Hon. Secretary.

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MEETING

The next meeting of the Club will be held at the Tasmanian Museum on Thursday, 21st March, at 8.00 p.m. Nature films will be screened, as follows:- "A Divided World", "Free to Roam", "Kangaroos", "Marbles in Miniature", and "Bee City".

OUTING

on Saturday, 23rd March. Working bee at Eaglehawk Neck if sufficient private transport can be arranged. Details at meeting.

EASTER CAMP

If you haven't already done so, please see Mr Sargison as soon as possible if you intend coming to the Camp at Eaglehawk Neck.

MEXICO

Mr and Mrs L. Luckman have invited all T.F.N.C. members to see their slides on their recent trip to Mexico and the States at the Town Hall on Monday, 25th March, at 8.00 p.m.

SHARLAND'S SYMPHONY OUTSIDE A FLAT

Have you heard the starlings flocking in St David's Park about 6.00 p.m. lately, just opposite the new flats?

OBSERVATION

Mr J. Picone has reported that, while spending a couple of nights at "Thark", on Mount Wellington, a mother and half-grown brush opossum came into the hut through the window on the first night. The youngster was an albino and the light of the torch caused him (or her) considerable distress. This is because the absence of pigment in an albino results in multiple reflections of light inside the eye instead of absorption of light by pigment, as in normal individuals. The second night the pair came down the chimney and it was then observed that the albino was slightly pigmented (with soot!). Mr Picone photographed the albino and we hope to see the result in due course.

ETHNOLOGICAL NOTE

We have just been privileged to see a remarkable method of obtaining fire by a young Tasmanian. Wanting our post prandial cup of coffee and having no matches we asked our native boy for a light. Dipping some cotton waste in a handy bottle of acetone he applied this to sparks flashed from an electric soldering machine that happened to be nearby, and when the acetone burst into flame he ran with it to a gas ring which happened to be in the next room - and so we had our coffee. As we distinctly remember reading in one of our school books that the Tasmanian civilization was the most primitive on earth we felt that this observation was worthy of immortalization in our Circular. We feel that this method is better than that of rubbing two scouts together, as two scouts may not always be handy...

Kelsey Aves,
HON. SECRETARY.

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CIRCULAR.

TASMANIAN FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

EASTER CAMP, 1957.

AT "PENDENNIS", EAGLEHAWK NECK

APRIL 18th - 23rd.

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The Camp Committee has selected Eaglehawk Neck, on the property "pendennis", the home of the late Mr. W. Clemes, for this year's camp. Probably this area has the most richly varied habitats of any the Club has visited - shore types from extreme exposure to sheltered near-lagoon, heathland, sand dunes and rain forest, and perhaps the best scenic attractions of the east coast.

Members are urged to make bookings as soon as possible with Mr. H.F. Sargison at 21, Elizabeth Street as this makes the task of the organisers so much easier for placing orders for stores, etc. Bookings should be accompanied by a deposit towards camp fees and transport.

Camp fees (payable in advance) are the same as last year:-

- ADULTS - £6.10.0;
- SCHOOL CHILDREN (over 12 years) - £5;
- SCHOOL CHILDREN (under 12 years) - £3.10.0.

Transport of baggage and costs of bus are included in the above.

The Club relies on a small team of willing workers to get the camp ready, but would appreciate more workers in the advance party and therefore hopes other members this year may be able to accompany this party. Advance party members should see Mr. Sargison regarding arrangements as soon as possible.

DATES AND TIMES.

- Saturday, April 13th. 8.00 a.m. at 33 Mortimer Avenue, New Town. Hands wanted to help load equipment on to lorry.
- Monday, April 15th. Advance party leaves for Eaglehawk Neck.
- Thursday, April 18th. 7.00 p.m. Main party leaves by bus for Eaglehawk Neck (assemble at Franklin Square 15 minutes beforehand). Camp should be reached about 10 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 23rd. Camp ends. Depart for Hobart 2.30 p.m. (approx.).

Heavy baggage (suitcases, rucksacks, blankets, camp beds) must be delivered to 33 Mortimer Avenue NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, APRIL 12th. All parcels must be labelled with owner's name and marked "Field Naturalists' Camp". Please tie on strong labels (manila or wooden preferred) so that they will not tear off in transit. Light luggage (toilet gear, etc.) can be brought by bus on Thursday night.

DON'T FORGET THE DATES AND THE NECESSITY FOR EARLY BOOKING AT Mr. SARGISON'S SHOP.

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KELSEY AVES.
(Hon. Secretary)

1st March, 1957.

5th APRIL, 1957.

MEETING

Please note that the date of the meeting will be 11th April as the third Thursday in April is the departure date for the Easter Camp. The meeting will commence at 8.00 p.m. in the Royal Society's Room. Dr Guiler, who was to have spoken then, has a Fauna Board meeting in Launceston on that day, so we have had to postpone his talk. However, we are fortunate to have instead Mr Terry Cashion, and his subject will be "Ten Weeks on Cat Island". Mr Cashion recently acted as Fauna Board Warden on Cat Island for the nesting season of the gannets, and while there he also assisted the Museum and the C.S.I.R.O. in research work. He will show slides and speak of his activities there.

IT'S A DATE - IT'S THE DATE!

Friday, 12th April, the latest day to have your Easter Camp luggage at 33, Mortimer Avenue - luggage firmly wrapped and well and truly labelled. Also A.B's to load the lorry on 13th April at 8.00 a.m.

ADIOS, MEXICO; S'LONG, U.S.A.

Seldom have so many enjoyed so much in so little time as did those who accompanied Jessie and Leo Luckman on the personally conducted tour to the U.S. national parks and Mexico on 25th March at the Town Hall. In fact, it was with regret that we left that remarkable continent - regret tinged with the realisation that the considerable use of the superlative in America has some justification in fact, especially with regard to natural arches and canyons.

Be that as it may, with their very wide circle of interests and friends Leo and Jessie completely filled the Town Hall, and the spontaneous 'Ohs' and 'Ahs' showed appreciation of the slides which were enhanced by the informal comments of this talented couple. Before they went they said they felt they were going to represent us, their friends. They made us feel that they had done that and also they succeeded in a remarkable degree in sharing their holiday with us.

We do thank you most sincerely, Jessie and Leo.

Kelsey Aves (HON. SECRETARY)

MEETING

The next meeting of the Club will be held at the Tasmanian Museum on Thursday, 16th May, at 8.00 p.m. It will be a review of the Easter Camp at Eaglehawk Neck and should be an enjoyable evening. If there should be 3" of rain on the night of the meeting, don't worry about your car - Brownell, Yeoland, Lucas & How Corp. Inc. Pty Unltd will get you out.

OUTING

Saturday, 18th May. If enough cars can take enough people it is proposed to go to Mt Field National Park to see the deciduous beech at Lake Fenton in its autumn dress. We might hear or see a lyrebird, too. Meet at 9.00 a.m. outside Prince of Wales Theatre. Please notify the secretary or president at the meeting if you are taking a car or if you want a seat in a car.

MENTIONED IN DISPATCHES

Although we missed some familiar faces at Camp this year - notably Mr & Mrs Widdicombe and Mr Simson - we were very happy to have some new campers who seemed to "fit in" perfectly and assisted the organisers in all sorts of ways. We must mention Mr Lucas....and Mr Blythe... and Mr Shankley....and their families.....but where can we stop? Add those to the old brigade and you have a pretty good team against which mere floods and inches of mud don't matter. If they can survive and enjoy this camp, how much more would they enjoy the normal Easter Camp of clear sunny skies, gentle breezes, warm swimming and surfing, full Easter moon and properly timed tides for marine observers?

"PARDON, YOUR SLIP IS GROWING"

(Free paraphrase of lorryman addressing lorry, April 23rd to 25th).

FOR SALE

Where and as she lies, bedstead, inner and outer sprung, very wrought iron, non-skid. Apply Sargie, Eaglehawk Neck.

PERSONAL

Congratulations to Mr P. Crosbie Morrison on his appointment as Director of National Parks in Victoria. Another right man in the right place.....We are pleased to report that Mr Jim Willis, honorary camp botanist at the Jubilee Camp at Safety Cove, is off this month for a year in England.....Also we are pleased to hear that Mr Tarlton Rayment is recovering from his illness and that Mr Swann is back at work after an operation.

KELSEY AVES (Hon. Secretary)

TASMANIAN FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB.

CIRCULAR: No. 14

14th June, 1957

- MEETING: The next meeting of the Club will be held at the Tasmanian Museum on Thursday, June 20th, at 8 p.m. Past President Dr. E.R. Guiler will tell us about some collecting trips he has made around Tasmania recently.
- OUTING: On Saturday June 22nd. Fern Tree to Kingston down Summerleas Road. 10 a.m. bus to Fern Tree Hotel. Maybe we will get a royal welcome from a spoonbill at Kingston.
- THANK YOU To those car owners who took passengers up to National Park on May 18th. Again all who wanted to were able to get transport and enjoyed the lovely autumn colours of the Fagus, which was just at its best. Unfortunately Brer Lyre Bird he lay low and say practically nuthin. Brer Craike, however, he don't lay low and he get plenty of dazzling damsels to photograph against the flaming Fagus. Mr. and Mrs. Bolger, who arrived later than the rest of the party, had a grandstand view of a lyrebird on its display mound.
- CHRISTMAS CAMP: The Sec. of the Fed. of F.N.C's of Tas. (Miss Alice Wall) has asked members of our Club for suggestions for proposed combined camp for the next Christmas vacation. If you have any good site in mind, or other proposals, please see Miss Wall or the President at the meeting on Thursday.
- NEW RECORDS: The white ibis has been recorded for Tasmania for the first time. During the month this species has been noted from several areas in the N.W., from Oatlands and Blackmans Bay. Even non-ornithologists have been intensively interested. Mr. Sharland accounts for this record and for the spoonbill record by the fact that feeding grounds on the mainland have dried up to some extent. It is hoped that the birds will like Tasmania and stay here.
- MIMICRY BY STARLINGS: Mr. L. Wall writes - "The European Starling, which has been introduced into Tasmania, and is now one of our most common birds is renowned for its mimicry of other birds. I was reminded forcibly of this recently when I heard the distant call of a Pallid Cuckoo, which would be silent at this time of year even if it had remained in the State for the winter months. The call came from a Starling, of course.
- Could Club members co-operate in compiling a list of bird-calls which are copied by the Starling? I venture to suggest that there is a Starling living within ear-shot of every member, and that with little trouble a comprehensive list, which would be of great interest, could be compiled.
- UN-TIMELY OBSERVATIONS: noted this week, in summery sunshine - flowering currents and japonica in bloom.... nest-building materials being gathered intermittently, with stop-work meetings, by starlings and sparrows (although this may happen at other unseasonal times, says Mr. Sharland).
- ATTENTION EASTER CAMPERS: Mr. and Mrs. Alan Brownell invite campers to a reunion at 17 Red Knights Road on Saturday 22nd June, at 8.00 p.m. Basket Supper.

H.K. AVES

Hon. Secretary.

CIRCULAR No. 15

MEETING The next meeting of the Club will be held at the Tasmanian Museum on Thursday, 18th July, at 8.00 p.m. Professor J. R. Elliott, of the University of Tasmania, will give a talk with the intriguing title "What Would You Call It?"

OUTING on Saturday, 20th July. Train to Bridgewater, 10.00 a.m. from Hobart, returning from Bridgewater at 4.00 p.m.

THE JUNE OUTING

A party of 10 had a very pleasant walk from Fern Tree to Kingston on 22nd June. They were greeted on alighting at Fern Tree by the sight of a silver wattle in almost full bloom! And on the shortest day in the year! The following plants were observed in flower:- Trigger plant, parrots-food, common heath, silver, spreading and the autumn wattles and prickly mimosa, cheeseberry and cyathodes acerosa, correa reflexa, Banksia, white flag, golden oxylobium, tea-tree, fireweed, and she-oak.

There was also a good tally of birds, 24 species being observed:- Goldfinch, Black Cockatoo, Black Jay, Blue Wren, Spurwing Plover, Scarlet Robin, Dusky Robin, Spotted Pardalote, Striated Pardalote, Green Rosella, Grey Thrush, Spinebill Honeyeater, Crescent Honeyeater, Yellow-throated Honeyeater, Strong-billed Honeyeater, Black-headed Honeyeater, Grey Fantail, Golden Whistler, Brown(?) or Ewing's(?) Thornbill, Noisy Miner, White-Eye, Blackbird, Coot, and Grey Teal.

To round off the outing the party was shown over the new Dutch Reformed Church at Kingston - very lovely in its sheer simplicity of colour and design. It was built by voluntary and largely 'unskilled' labour, but there is beautiful craftsmanship throughout, especially in the furniture.

RE-UNION Members and friends who camped at Eaglehawk Neck last Easter enjoyed an evening of camp reminiscences at the home of Mr & Mrs Brownell, and very much appreciated their hospitality. Unfortunately Mr Brownell had broken his wrist and was still in hospital, but is now home again and making a quick recovery.

AN ORGY OF COLLECTIVE NOUNS

contributed by Mr Craike, who says that some are of very ancient origin - An unkindness of rooks, a deceit of lapwings, a business of ferrets, a paddling of ducks, a descent of woodpeckers, a sloth of bears, a clowder of cats, a charm of finches (Anglo-saxon CHIRM = noise, din, or chatter), a tidings of magpies, a shrewdness of apes, a knot of toads, a cowardice of curs, a walk of snipe, a crash of rhinos, a murder of crows, a richness of martens, a murmuration of starlings, a gaggle of geese and a pride of lions.

(Believed to be of recent origin are the following - a conservation of Luckmans, a whistle of Widdicombes, a cassette of Hewers, and an accessory bag of Craikes. Ed.)

KELSEY AVES,
Hon. Secretary.

MEETING The next meeting of the Club will be held at the Tasmanian Museum on Thursday, 15th August, at 8.00 p.m. Dr E. Guiler will tell us about some recent collecting trips in Tasmania.

MEMBERS' NIGHT Advance notice is given of the proposed Members' Night for the September meeting. It is hoped that a number of members will volunteer to give short talks, 5-15 minutes, illustrated or otherwise, on some aspect of natural history. This evening is intended especially for young (and older) members who have not yet, or have rarely, spoken at meetings.

OUTING on Saturday, 17th August. Place and time will be announced at the meeting.

THE JULY OUTING On an idyllic alp on Cobb's Hill 17 sat down (or wandered about) for lunch, but the number was fluid as some left early by car while others in cars met the main party most conveniently under Dromedary just about going-home time. Few flowers were encountered (*Pterostylis longifolia* being the only orchid) but most of the party were very thrilled to see their first bittern playing hide and seek amongst the reeds near Bridgewater. It is not that the bittern is rare, but it usually escapes observation by its remarkably efficient camouflage. Swallows were hawking on the lagoon beyond Austins Ferry - probably 'left-overs' from the migration.

STILL MORE collective nouns, contributed this time by Mr Caines - a glean of herrings, a pack of wolves, a brace of quail, a kindle of kittens, a flight of swallows, a congregation of plover, an exalation of larks.

WOULDN'T IT FLUORESCENCE YOU? The day after we received our last electric light bill we came upon Letter LXVIII in Gilbert White's 'Natural History of Selborne'. After describing in detail how rush lights are made he goes on to say "In a pound of dry rushes, avoirdupois, which I caused to be numbered and weighed, we found upwards of one thousand six hundred individuals. Now suppose each of these burns, one with another, only half an hour, then a poor man will purchase eight hundred hours of light, a time exceeding thirty three days, for three shillings".

Our first indignation at the injustice of modern lighting bills simmered down somewhat when we calculated that a 40 watt fluorescent lamp would shine for 800 hours at somewhere near 23/-, while the 3/- for rush-light would not be much below the 'basic wage' of 1780. 'Selborne' is always good reading!

KELSEY AVES
Hon. Secretary.

MEETING The next meeting of the Club will be held at the Tasmanian Museum on Thursday, 19th September, at 8.00 p.m. It will be a Members' Night and there will be a number of short talks from different members. Please communicate with the President or Secretary by the 18th if you can offer a contribution - however small.

OUTING on Saturday, 21st September. South Arm by private transport. Meet by the Prince Theatre at 9.30 a.m. Wildflowers, beach life, bush birds and waders should be seen.

CHRISTMAS CAMP Miss Wall notifies us that the Combined Camp of the Federation of Tasmanian Field Naturalists' Societies will be held this year at Cradle Mountain, 26th December to 3rd January (or later if members advise in time). The area is a wonderful one for field naturalists - alpine flora and fauna and breathtaking scenery. It is hoped that some mainlanders will come. Members who wish to camp with the Federation please notify Miss R. Featherstone, the assistant secretary. Early booking is essential as this is such a popular area.

GOOD NEIGHBOUR COUNCIL A 5 minute 'report back' will be given at the meeting by one of our representatives on the Council, Dr M. Thynne. In this she will tell us of some of its lesser known activities. She is very anxious for the help of volunteers, particularly in hospital visitation of New Australians. Please communicate with her at B9858 if you can help.

WHOOPEE!! Several members lately have asked for a Field Naturalists' Social. A few years ago the Club launched several which we still remember with some nostalgia. We recall particularly the presentation to 'Peregrine' of a 'bound volume' of his Nature Notes which it took 3 strong silent men to lift. So your Committee has arranged for a Social at the C.W.A. Club room off Criterion Street on Saturday, 28th September, at 8.00 p.m. Ladies are asked to bring a 'basket' and gentlemen to donate a silver coin to cover the rent of the rooms. Quite definitely, a good time will be had by all, and it's a good opportunity for the new and the old members to get to know each other.

NIL DESPERANDUM Club members were invited to join the Cine Society's bus trip to the Ski Championships recently. Hardly any snow had fallen by 30th August and the championships were cancelled - but the bus trip was not, and the following report was contributed by Miss Featherstone..... "Two members who went up to National Park on the 31st August were thrilled by the sight of newly fallen snow on trees and bushes by the roadside. The snow was four or five inches deep at the Lake Fenton shelter-shed, where they left the bus, and it fell softly as they walked up the road and over Wombat Moor to Lake Dobson. The mist was swirling over the top of Mt Mawson, and the lake was black and still against the background of snow-covered pencil pines and the white shores of the lake. The sun shone through the mist and made little diamonds in the snow, and reflected the green undersides of the pencil pine branches in one glassy patch of water. Near the Walking Club Hut the snowy track was unmarked, and the trees beside the path swayed gently under their light burden of snow, the reddish-brown trunks of some of them contrasting beautifully with the white background. Along the rest of the track, past Eagle Tarn and into the pandanni grove nearby was like a walk through fairyland. The way through the pandanni twisted in and out, among the light brown trunks, and over a snow-laden bridge spanning a tiny stream. The pandanni fronds were bending slightly with the weight of snow, which came to a point at the end of each one, so that the tips and undersides of the fronds showed up silvery-green, and this, with the rich browns and light reds round about, made a perfect colour scheme. One of the pandanni took a dislike (or perhaps it was a liking, in a pandanni way!) to one of the members of the party, and plopped several fronds-full of snow on her head, while people standing on either side escaped! It had stopped snowing on the return journey to the bus and the late sun threw shadows and golden lights across the snow."

FOR YOUR NATURE JOURNAL You may safely fill in, in advance, for 28th September, - "Had a whale of a good time at the Field Nats' Social."

KELSEY AVES (Hon. Secretary)

MEETING The next meeting of the Club will be held at the Tasmanian Museum on Thursday, 17th October, at 8.00 p.m. The speaker will be Mr Murray Longman, geologist on the Museum staff, and he will give us a general chat on geology.

OUTING on Saturday, 19th October, on the lower slopes of the mountain. Meet at Franklin Square to catch the 9.50 a.m. trolley bus to the Cascades. Spring flowers and birds will be the main objectives.

FIRE!! FIRE! We quote from Gilbert White's Natural History of Selborne c.1780 - Though (by statute 4 and 5 William and Mary, c.23) "to burn on any waste, between Candlemas and Midsummer, any grig, ling, heath and furze, gors or fern, is punishable with whipping and confinement in the house of correction;" yet, in this forest, about March or April, according to the dryness of the season, such vast heath-fires are lighted up, that they often get to a masterless head, and, catching the hedges, have sometimes been communicated to the underwoods, woods, and coppices, where great damage has ensued. The plea for these burnings is, that, when the old coat of heath, etc., is consumed, young will sprout up, and afford much tender browse for cattle; but where there is large old furze, the fire, following the roots, consumes the very ground; so that for hundreds of acres nothing is seen but smother and desolation, the whole circuit round looking like the cinders of a volcano; and the soil being quite exhausted, no traces of vegetation are to be found for years."

Similar sentiments were expressed in more picturesque and forcible language by Dr Guiler in his talk to the Club recently. Those who take the long-term view of burning-off may be surprised that there was even one critic of this practice in England as far back as 1780. It shows once again how far ahead of his time, the 'father of English Field Naturalists' was.

KELSEY AVES,
Hon. Secretary.

MEETING

The next meeting of the Club will be held at the Tasmanian Museum on Thursday, 21st November, at 8.00 p.m. Sound colour films of great interest to natural historians will be shown - "Wheels Across Australia" and "The Land of the Kangaroo".

OUTING

Fern Tree to St Crispin's Well. Further details to be given at the meeting.

CHRISTMAS CAMP

The Federation of Field Naturalists' Clubs of Tasmania Christmas Camp is to be held at Cradle Mountain from 26th December, 1957, to approx. 3rd January, 1958. As Cradle Mountain is a popular place at that time of year, we should like all bookings (tentative and otherwise) to be confirmed with Miss R. Featherstone, c/o The A.B.C. (Phone B7821) before the 21st November, or at the meeting on the 21st, if it is not possible to confirm it before then. A definite number of bookings must be handed in to the ranger at Cradle before the end of November. A list of charges for Cradle Mountain is as follows:

Chalet	£5.5.0	per week	with linen supplied
"	£4.10.0	" "	with own linen
Cabins	£1.0.0 to £3.0.0	per week	

Members could state preferences when confirming their bookings. Any further information can be obtained from Miss Featherstone.

REASONING CROW?

Extract from "The Countryman" - "I hang suet on thin strings about 10 inches long from the cross bars of our clothes posts for the tits. It is amusing to see crows, after eyeing the morsels from the ground, fly up on to one of the posts and make clumsy and vain attempts to reach them. Last winter I watched one crow stand on a cross-bar, and after a few minutes' apparent study, reach down as far as it could, grasp the string with its beak and haul it up length by length till the suet was at bar level. As the bird was swallowing a piece it would accidentally let the rest fall, and it hauled the lump up five times. Surely this is evidence that at least some individual birds possess the power to reason? I have not seen a crow repeat the operation since." F.C.W. Stevenson, Surrey, England.

THE BIG BROAD FLEXIBLE OUTLOOK

"...Just the same applies to my feeling for what is called 'nature'. Other people won't stop and look at the things I want to look at, or, if they do they stop to please me or humour me or to keep the peace. But I am so made that as sure as I am with anyone, I begin to give consideration to their opinions and their desires and they are not worth half the consideration that mine are." Katherine Mansfield's Journal.

OBSERVATIONS

A member reports "Two friends were walking over the top of a hill near Kingston, when they suddenly noticed a small grey lizard with its head poking out of a hole in the ground. They discovered that it was laying eggs, and it laid about six or eight, greyish-white in colour, while they watched. When it had finished, it turned around and poked them with its head into the ground. Then it came out and poked the sand into the hole - sometimes with its back to the hole and pushing the sand in backwards, and sometimes facing the hole, pushing the sand forwards. When the two observers went back later the ground was very smooth and they wouldn't have known anything had been there at all."

RADIO TALKS

For the information of members, Mr John Skemp, well-known Tasmanian naturalist and author, gives a natural history talk entitled CALENDAR OF THE COUNTRY-SIDE, on the first Monday in every month - the next one being on Monday, 2nd December, at 9.30 p.m. from 7ZL:NT:QN. His talks are interesting and topical.

Kelsey Aves,
HON. SECRETARY.