



Bulletin

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<https://tasfieldnats.org.au>

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We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we study natural history.

Franklin Forest excursion

Saturday 6th May 2023

On a clear cool May morning, we gathered together in the hills behind Franklin in the Huon Valley. The Franklin Forest is an island of rainforest and tall eucalyptus forest in an otherwise heavily clear-felled and recently burnt area. It has had a stay of execution due to the lobbying of the Friends of Franklin Forest.

The group congregated in a small clearing, with towering man ferns on either side.

We then split into two groups. As the circuit through the forest was only about 1 km long, some wanted to do the circuit and return home for lunch.



Field Nats at Franklin Forest
Photo: Eddie Gall

To access the forest, we had to traverse down 200m of regenerating burnt forest, the eastern-most extent of the 2018 Gell River fire which burnt a huge area of Tasmania's South-west. The rainforest starts at the Castle Forbes Rivulet which winds through a grove of

tall man ferns. The taped route then goes through horizontal scrub before emerging into a more open rainforest and, as it rises up a slope, into forest of tall eucalyptus, myrtles and sassafras. The forest then thins out and the previous species are replaced by towering leatherwood and native laurel, with tree ferns still occasionally scattered about. This habitat continues back to the start of the loop.



Dermocybe canaria
Photo: Eddie Gall

Being May, it was close to the peak of fungi season. Features included the spectacular lion's mane fungus (*Hericium coralloides*), colourful *Hygrocybe* spp., *Cortinarius* spp. and *Entoloma* spp. as well as many large brackets of *Ganoderma austral*. Common calls included "Look at this one!" "Wow, the colour is so intense!", and "What is this one called?"



Left - *Hericium coralloides*

Right - *Gloioxanthomces chromolimonea*

Photo: Eddie Gall

It was much less impressive for insect species however, a common theme in saturated rainforests such as the Franklin Forest. Although there was a reasonable diversity of land snails, which were found mainly under rotting logs. Some notable invertebrates included numerous *Tasmathera ricei* (a 3-4 mm Charopid species), a 2 mm cyptorhynchid weevil (*Decilaus* sp.), and a similarly sized fungus weevil (*Xynotropis* sp.), which was found by beating dead fern fronds.



Hymenotorrendiella eucalypti on a fallen blackwood leaf
Photo: Eddie Gall

Many of the findings have been posted on iNaturalist (<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/tas-field-nats-2023-may-franklin-forest?tab=observations>)

Many of the insect and snail species found on the trip were collected and will be deposited in the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) insect collections. The snail species were collected for an ongoing study of Australian Punctids and Charopids.

A list of the main invertebrate, fungus and plant species found on the outing can be found on iNaturalist.

Otto Bell & Eddie Gall

Excursion to Pelverata Falls

Saturday 3rd June 2023

Pelverata Falls, located in Snug Tiers, are one of the tallest in Tasmania, plunging 114 metres into a deep dolerite gorge, cut out by Pelverata Creek.

Commencing as a quite wide four-wheel track, the walking trail narrows to become steep and rocky in places just before reaching the falls.



Field Nats at Pelverata Falls
Photo: Amanda Thomson

Seventeen members turned up for a cool, winters walk to on June 3rd.

Before leaving the car park, Eddie presented Kevin with his Club mug, following his Life Membership award at Thursday's meeting.



Keven Bonham (L) with Eddie Gall (R)
Photo: Amanda Thomson

Within seconds of heading up the track Genevieve spotted the first fungus of the day, half hidden from the eye, and then David found another. This, he said, is an interesting one, and it certainly stood out as a scattering of small, bright-yellow fruiting bodies along one side of the track. David said it was a lichen, *Omphalia chromacea*, and of course, we were seeing the fungal part of it reproducing. The surface of the soil around them was coloured greenish by the lichen. It is an unusual lichen in that the alga is associated with a

basidiomycete rather than the usual ascomycete. Its name has changed constantly, and the latest version is *Lichenomphalia chromacea*. Nobody knows how the fungal spores join up with the alga to form the lichen.



Lichenomphalia chromacea
Photo: Sabine Borgis

As we walked there were some very light showers barely deserving of a raincoat.

Although initially, there were plenty of fungi to keep the photographers happy, few were seen on the rest of the trip. However, there were plenty of springtails and other tiny arthropods (collembola, small wasps, harvestmen), mainly caught by Keith using his beating sheet, who took some amazing macrophotographs of these small creatures.



Family Encyrtidae
Photo: Keith Martin-Smith

Unusually, we really didn't stop much till we reached the falls. Perhaps it was the cold. We lunched at the

viewing platform for the falls. They were a fairly narrow stream of water falling down a dolerite escarpment. I (John) was amazed at how little the water had cut into the dolerite. The dolerite was defeating the waterfall. Dolerite is King in Tasmania!



Pelverata Falls
Photo: Kay Wilson

The final section of the walk was a traverse across a very steep dolerite slope. The scree was unusual; a few large blocks, with mostly much smaller clasts. The final view of the falls revealed a scarp of dolerite columns above a large convex dolerite intrusion. LISTMap shows the scarp itself ~540masl, the top of the falls 500masl, our vantage point at the lookout 370masl.

Geologist David Leaman, in *Walk into History in Southern Tasmania*, makes these points: The dolerite scree we had traversed is peri-glacial in origin. The dolerite itself has resulted from multiple intrusions. This accounts for the visible difference. The vertical extent of dolerite is rarely repeated in eastern Tasmania.

The plateau drained by Pelverata and Slippery Creek is a boggy, peaty catchment that is wetter and much colder than is normal for this elevation, which accounts for the strikingly unusual mix of plants that we found there (*Walk into History in Tasmanian Reserves*. p. 358).

The return to the car was pleasant with some good "naturalist" conversations and the end only slightly marred by one of our authors (John's) realisation he had left his walking pole on the track somewhere. The trick with poles is to not put them behind the log that you sit on. Out of sight, out of mind!

A Good day was had by all!



Pimelia drupacea
Photo: Annabel Carle

Observations have been listed on iNaturalist under TFNC umbrella projects – Pelverata Falls

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/tas-field-nats-2023-jun-pelverata-falls>

John Rosendale , Amanda Thomson & Kay Wilson

Excursion to Coningham,

Saturday 8th July, 2023

Despite some dodgy weather in Hobart before and after, nineteen Field Nats ventured out for the Coningham excursion and were rewarded with mostly fine weather with just a little rain at lunchtime.



Field Nats at Coningham
Photo: Amanda Thomson

We followed the foreshore track from the main carpark around to the cave, a distance of just under 2 km each way, through mostly dry woodland on sandstone with a few damper gullies and one small beach. This was the same route as the April 2011 and September 2015 outings. With so few plants in flower, it felt quite different to the same area in springtime. One section

near the cave had had a recent (but not very intense) fuel reduction burn.



Cave near Snug Point
Photo: Eddie Gall

Many observations have been recorded on iNaturalist but it was an animal we didn't see that most impressed me - echidnas had been very busy with their earthworks along the early parts of the track. Keith reported that it was a quiet day for foliage insects, but a few invertebrates were still about, including a jumping spider with chevron markings. I also found a bristletail (*Machiloides hickmani*) under a rock in a smaller cave above the track, and a sleepy chrysomelid beetle (tentatively IDd as *Chalcolampra thoracica*) in bark.



Chalcolampra thoracica
Photo: Kevin Bonham

A small number of *Pterostylis alata* (striped greenhood) were among a few orchid species in flower and it was surprising how some of these were still in bud with others finished. Among bird sightings, a sea eagle was briefly seen near the cave and a scarlet robin bobbed around our lunch site. On route to the outing some of us had excellent sightings of a low-flying wedge-tailed eagle over the Margate Train. A good short walk and just the right length outing for a short winter day.



Pterostylis alata
Photo: Eddie Gall

Kevin Bonham

Dr Kevin Bonham – Newest Life Member

The May 2023 TFNC General Meeting unanimously passed a motion that life membership be awarded to Kevin Bonham, and this was awarded at the June Meeting.



Kevin receiving his life membership from club president Eddie Photo: Keith Matin-Smith

Kevin has served on the TFNC committee continuously from 1988 to 2022 - a total of 34 years! During that time, he was:

- President 9 years;
- Vice President 17 years;
- Librarian 3 years; and
- General Committee member 5 years.

In addition to his contribution to our Club committee - Kevin is an expert in Australian land snails, especially

those from Tasmania and Victoria. He is also interested in, and skilled at identifying, Tasmanian orchids, millipedes, centipedes and some beetle groups and bristletails, as well as marine cowries. He is experienced in the ordinal sorting of invertebrates (or the determination of ranking for taxonomic purposes) and is an Honorary Curator at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

We have also enjoyed listening to his interviews and reading his blog during the lead-up to elections in his side hustle as a psephologist - a political analyst who specialises in the "quantitative analysis of elections and balloting".

Within the Club, Kevin has always been very generous in sharing his expertise and knowledge on outings and in Club talks. He is an expert on the TFNC Club Rules and remains the go-to person whenever clarification is required.

We thank Kevin for his enormous contribution, leadership, and look forward to his ongoing commitment to the Club.

Elizabeth (Sib) Corbett and Keith Corbett awarded Order of Australia Medals (OAM)

Long time members of the TFNC Sib and Keith Corbett have each been awarded the Order of Australia Medal for 'Services to Conservation and the Environment' on the 2023 King's Birthday Honours List.

In recent times they led the 2022 TFNC Easter Camp to the West Coast and February 2023's overnight excursion to the Vale of Belvoir.

Sib's citation listed some of her greatest contributions:

1. Botanist and vegetation mapper with Tasmanian Government;
2. Former president of Australian Plants Society Tasmania & life member since 1988;
3. Former secretary of Tasmanian Bushland Garden;
4. Life Member of Tasmanian Land Conservancy since 2019;
5. Contribution to TFNC;
6. Author, *Vegetation of the Central Plateau: Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area*; and
7. Co-Author, *The Vegetation of Rocky Cape National Park*.

Keith's citation listed some of his accomplishments:

1. Former president of Australian Plants Society Tasmania & life member since 2010;

2. Current president of Tasmanian Bushland Garden;
3. Life Member of Tasmanian Land Conservancy since 2019;
4. Contribution to TFNC (including articles for *The Tasmanian Naturalist*);
5. Geologist for 60 years and still active in the Tasmanian Geoconservation Database Reference Group;
6. Author and co-author of over 50 peer-reviewed scientific papers on Tasmanian geology;
7. Co-author, *Geological Evolution of Tasmania*; and
8. Author, *Child of Gondwana: The Geological Making of Tasmania*.

The club is lucky to have members who have achieved so much and are able to contribute their time and effort. We always enjoy their company, their leadership, and their insightful understanding of the nature around us.

Congratulations Sib and Keith!

Great Southern BioBlitz 2023

This year's Great Southern Bioblitz will be held from 24th to 27th November. More information is available from <https://www.greatsouthernbioblitz.org/about-1>.

Don Hird Travel Blog

TFNC Life member Don Hird is currently travelling through Southeast Asia. If you are interested in following his travels, his blog is available at [Punctuating Retirement, by Don Hird \(crazyguyonabike.com\)](https://www.punctuatingretirement.com).

Closing the TFNC Library

The June committee meeting and subsequent General meeting voted to close our Library. A sub-committee has been formed (Annabel C, Anna McE, Amanda T and Fiona Gumboots) This is our plan to date, but it is still subject to change.

- Books published by TFNC: One copy of books published by TFNC will be transferred to the TFNC archives, a total of 16 books. The earliest is a copy of *Ferns of Tasmania* by Leonard Rodway published in 1905, and other titles include *Butterflies of Tasmania*; *Jewel Beetles of Tasmania*; both editions of the *Field Guide to Tasmanian Fungi* and *The*

Seashells of Tasmania; and the two *Between the Tasmanian Tidelines* publications.

- Donated Books: We have contacted as many of the donors as we can to ask if they would prefer their books to be returned or if we could sell or otherwise dispose of them. At this stage six books will be returned to four donors.
- Rare &/or valuable books: We are reviewing the library catalogue. Currently there are about 70 books which may be considered rare &/or valuable. It is intended that these books are offered to members at appropriately but advantageously prices.
- All other books will be sold to members for a nominal price (\$5? TBC)

Paying for and collecting books: All payments for books must be made in cash on the day of book collection and a receipt will be issued. We will not post out books. If members are unable to attend a meeting, they will need to arrange for others to collect and pay for them on their behalf.

When will books be made available? At this stage we do not expect to begin selling or otherwise disposing of our books until the September or maybe the October General meeting. Members will be emailed details of the books which will be made available at the upcoming meeting(s)

How will we dispose of the books which members do not acquire? Suggestions to date include:

- Peregrine School, Nicholls Rivulet
- Sustainable Living Centre, Mt Nelson
- Other Tasmanian Field Naturalists Clubs
- 'Cracked and Spineless,' 'Just Tassie Books' at Campbell Town and Astrolabe etc.
- Rotary club Book sales
- 'Vinnies'

The sub-committee will welcome any ideas and suggestions! Please send them to librarian@tasfieldnats.org.au

Annabel Carle (Librarian)

From the Archives: TFNC Quarterly News July 1940:

An undesirable emigrant

"It's arrived! yes, the Cabbage White Butterfly (*Pieris rapae*) we warned you about it in July 1939 (Editors

note: when it was officially recorded in Australia for the first time when it was sighted in the grounds of the University of Melbourne and at Canterbury in Melbourne, although it had already been a serious pest in NZ for some years) A collector for the Biological Survey reports having seen some thousands of these serious pests on New Year's Day at Rocky Head. They were flying in from the sea like a cloud and continued their flight along the coast towards Stanley. Many settled in the districts as they went, and no doubt eggs were laid in vegetable gardens.

The caterpillar of this pest is a velvety green with a faint yellow stripe down its back and a row of yellow spots down the sides. Arsenical sprays or dusting control it. Vegetables of many kinds are destroyed by this caterpillar, and as the eggs will be hatching in the coming months everyone should keep a strict look out for them and immediately report any found. If any eggs, caterpillars, or butterflies of this species are found it would be a great help if any specimens were sent to the Secretary, The Biological Survey, or to Dr. Evans, Government Entomologist, Hobart."

Census of Vascular Plants 2023

Is it an *Astroloma* or a *Styphelia*? A *Richea* or a *Dracophyllum*? Genetic studies are revising the relationships of many plant species. These have resulted in many species being renamed or changing the genera they are classified to. You can keep up with the latest nomenclature via the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery's Census of Vascular Plants <https://flora.tmag.tas.gov.au/resources/census/>. The link also gives access to lists and descriptions of Tasmanian lichen genera and species.

Changes to the Club Rules 2023

The Club Rules were initially written in 1904 and were first reviewed in 1971. When the club was incorporated in 1991, they were modified again.

The June 2023 meeting of the TFNC Committee proposed some necessary changes to the Club Rules which were taken to the TFNC General Meeting of 6th July 2023 for endorsement.

The changes in the club rules were to achieve the following:

- Allow electronic banking.
- Incorporate electronic media into the definition of writing, especially the use of email and websites.

- Update the postal address.
- Better represent how the club functions.
- Clarify the current roles undertaken by the secretary, treasurer, and public officer.
- Delete details which were relevant only to the original incorporation of TFNC.
- Replace the Librarian position with a Communications Officer, following the June General Meeting's decision to disband the library.

The committee tried to minimize the number of changes, which address the important issues of the impact of electronic media and payments and how roles and responsibilities have evolved over time. The changes proposed were consistent with the Tasmanian Government's Associations Incorporations (Model Rules) Regulations 2017, but did not cover any update to current standards of punctuation, spelling, and expression.

Club Rules state that changes needed to be made through a 'Special Resolution' and at least three quarters of members present at a General Meeting need to agree to the changes.

The Special Resolution was:

That the 6th July 2023 General Meeting of the Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club Inc. endorses the proposed changes to the club rules to come into effect from the 2024 Annual General Meeting.

The Special Resolution was moved by Anna McEldowney and seconded by Annabel Carle.

The TFNC General Meeting of 6th July had 26 members present and 24 voted in favour of the special resolution. The meeting declared the Special Resolution as carried.

The new rules will come into effect from the next Annual General Meeting, scheduled for March 2024.

The amended rules are now available from the TFNC website

<https://tasfieldnats.org.au/data/documents/TFNC-Rules-starting-from-AGM-2024.pdf> .

From the Committee:

Request for Articles for *The Tasmanian Naturalist* 2023

We are calling for contributions to the 2023 edition of *The Tasmanian Naturalist*. If you have ideas or know someone who may like to write an article, please

contact editor@tasfieldnats.org.au . All contributions are greatly appreciated!

The editor would like to remind authors, especially new ones, to read the Guidelines for Contributors before drafting their contributions. Correct formatting saves the volunteer editor lots of time! Guidelines, information and previous editions can be found on the TFNC website using the following link <https://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/naturalist/>

The deadline for submission of papers is Thursday 31st August 2023.

A Field Guide to Tasmanian Fungi

TFNC will reprint an additional 1000 copies of *A Field Guide to Tasmanian Fungi* by life members Genevieve Gates and David Ratkowsky to meet the demand for this popular guidebook. This is potentially the final reprint so it may be worthwhile purchasing a spare copy while stocks last. Copies can be purchased online at the TFNC bookshop <https://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/bookshop/> .

TFNC Donations 2023

Continuing our donation initiative for programs which contribute to the study and protection of Tasmanian natural history, the TFNC is donating to five organisations:

- Nature Trackers - CallTrackers (Dr. Jim Lovell),
- Handfish Conservation Project (Dr. Jemina Stuart-Smith),
- Landscape Recovery Foundation (Dr. Magali Wright Orchid RecoveryProject),
- Tasmanian Land Conservancy Sloping Main Reserve,
- Derwent Estuary Program and one more to be decided.

General meetings – Recent talks

General Meeting- Thursday 4th May

Laura Williams from Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens presented “From the Miniscule to the Mega Herb, the Flora of Macquarie Island”.

General Meeting- Thursday June

Jim Lovell: Fantastic Beasts and Where to Hear Them: Bioacoustics in Tasmania

General Meeting- Thursday 6th July

Kelsie Fractal from the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies presented “Recognising the Importance of Seagrass in Tasmania’s Marine Environment”.

Upcoming speakers

7.30 first Thursday of every month

3rd August - Dr. Tiana Pirtle: Deer & Other Invasive Species

7th September - Lisa-ann Gershwin: Things that Glow in the Dark in Tasmania

5th October - Dr. Tessa Smith: Beetles

2nd November - Dr. James Wood: Flora

7th December - Members’ Night

Planned excursions

10:00 AM Saturday following General Meeting

5th August - Risdon Brook Dam & Mt Direction

9th September - Bisdee Tier (Melton Mowbray)

7th October - Chauncy Vale combined excursion with Launceston Field Naturalists Club

5th November - Mt Wellington with Dr James Wood

9th December - Christmas BBQ

Please note – all upcoming excursions and general meetings are still subject to change.