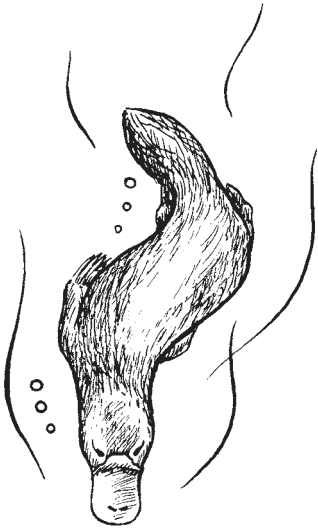


Bulletin

<https://tasfieldnats.org.au>

Quarterly Bulletin No. 378 April 2020

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Left: A magnificent specimen of Aseroe rubra seen on the excursion to Shipstern Bluff in March.

An open invitation to Field Nats all around Tasmania

The next TFNC Bulletin will be circulated in late July, but we will have no excursions to report.

Many members are out in their backyards and surrounding natural areas, examining the flora and fauna, taking magnificent photographs and sharing knowledge about various creatures, plants and mystery objects. Please send the editor a short description of interesting discoveries, with or without illustration, and we will publish them in the July Bulletin.

Email to tfn.bulletin.editor@gmail.com before 23 July.

TFNC Meetings and Excursions

These are currently canceled, but will return to the normal schedule when restrictions are lifted. Please watch our website for the latest news.

General Meetings start at 7.15 pm for 7.30 pm on the first Thursday of the month and feature a guest speaker on natural history (no meetings or excursions in January). Meetings are held in the Life Science Building at the University of Tasmania.

Excursions are usually held the following Saturday or Sunday. Final details will be decided at the preceding Thursdays meeting and published on the website after the meeting. Bring lunch and all-weather outdoor gear.

Cascades kunanyi/Mt Wellington Excursion

Saturday 8th. February

On an early February morning, eight field naturalists set off on a circuit around the Cascades. The weather was calm and overcast and the temperature was very pleasant. The dry spring and summer leading up to the excursion meant that there were virtually no biting insects or annoying flies, so conditions made it great for walking and observing.



Small group participating in the Cascades Excursion
Photograph: Amanda Thomson

The excursion started from the McRobies Gully Road entrance to Cascade Gardens and proceeded up through the rhododendron gardens and onto the ridge between Guy Fawkes Rivulet and McRobies Gully. It initially followed fire trails leading to the Main Fire Trail and the return part of the circuit was completed by following the Cascades Track. Being one of the longer distance excursions held in recent times, much of the walking was at a normal pace but inevitably it was periodically interrupted by walking at “Field Naturalists” pace as well as pauses for close studies of findings.

Above Cascade Gardens, the forest was full of weeds, but this quickly gave way to more natural vegetation. Initially the rock was sandstone with the forest canopy composed of *Eucalyptus amygdalina*, *E. obliqua* and *E. viminalis*. The understorey was sparse and mostly composed of *Exocarpos cupressiformis* and *Acacia dealbata* with a ground cover of *Lomandra longifolia*, *Dianella tasmanica*, *Pteridium esculentum* and some *Stylidium graminifolium*.

Further on, the bedrock was mudstone which gave rise to thin, gravelly, hard soils supporting open *Eucalyptus tenuiramis* forest. The understorey and shrub layers were both sparse and the number of species relatively low. Leaf litter covered much of the soil. A few Bennetts wallabies bounded away

from the side of the track, and a large flock of Forest Ravens (*Corvus tasmanicus*) had settled in the trees and gave an ongoing raucous chorus. The dry conditions may well have almost eliminated biting insects, but it also reduced the number of insects one would normally expect to find at this time of year. However, the number of butterflies fluttering around helped to make up for it, including the Hobart Brown (*Argynnis hobartia*) and Kings *Xenica* (*Geitoneura klugii*).

Initially, the fire trail followed the tops of the ridge, but further along it skirted around the northern side of the ridge. It was clear to see how the tops of the ridge were dominated mostly by *E. tenuiramis* but further down into the slopes the forest transitioned into a mix of *E. tenuiramis* and *E. obliqua* and even further into the gully the forest was mostly *E. obliqua* with only an occasional *E. tenuiramis*.

As we neared the Main Fire Trail the understorey became taller and thicker, possibly because of the increased rainfall due to approaching the mid-altitude slopes of kunanyi/Mt Wellington. The cuttings on the side of the track had quite a few holes which could have been the springtime nesting holes of Pardalotes.

It was a Saturday morning and with the number of mountain bike tracks in the near vicinity it was inevitable we encountered small groups of bikers, some racing downhill at breakneck speed. I suppose that’s only appropriate as the Breakneck Track was nearby!

For much of its distance, the Main Fire Trail follows the top of a wide firebreak maintained by the Hobart City Council. Rather than follow the track itself, we followed around the bottom of the firebreak. There, on the shrubs on the side and in the mix of grasses, ferns and *Juncus* spp., we found the greatest variety of insects including bugs, beetles, crane flies, moths and butterflies as well as a snail no bigger than a pin head. There was a fast, loud “Whoosh” overhead and although we looked up immediately, whatever it was had already disappeared. It didn’t sound like a drone so we supposed it must have been some sort of large, fast-moving raptor.

The Cascades Track descended along the Guy Fawkes Rivulet. Initially this was a moist fern gully with a mix of shrubs such as *Olearia* and *Bedfordia* under a canopy of *E. obliqua* and *E. globulus*. It had a good covering of *Polystichum proliferum*. In a normally wet autumn this forest carries a good variety of fungi than can last into mid-winter, but at this time of year, there was little evidence of them. A seat provided on the side of the track made for a good lunch spot, and it was dry enough that there were no leeches. For a while we watched a Scrubwren (*Sericornis humilis*) scratching through the forest litter, seemingly comfortable with our company.

Closer to South Hobart the forest was dominated by *E. obliqua* though it looked like *E. tenuiramis* was visible further up the slopes. There was a lot of open ground with a few larger shrubs such as *Exocarpos cupressiformis* and *Acacia dealbata*. Closer to the ground were patches of *Acacia terminalis*, *Pultenaea juniperina* and *Gahnia* sp. There appeared to be occasional small areas of understorey vegetation that had died, obviously not from fire but possibly due to the extended drought conditions.

Then it was back around the side of the Cascade Brewery to finish the circuit. I was waiting for someone to make a joke about the walk making them thirsty and needing a beer, but no one was forthcoming!

It had been a satisfying morning's foray into the forests bordering between the city and the mountain.

Eddie Gall

Plant List (Eddie Gall)

Dicots

Eucalyptus tenuiramis
E. obliqua
E. globulus, *E. viminalis*, *E. amygdalina* and *E. pulchella*
Acacia dealbata, *A. mucronata*, *A. melanoxylon* and *A. terminalis*
Exocarpos cupressiformis
Leptomeria drupacea
Beyeria viscosa
Pultenaea juniperina, *P. daphnoides* and *P. gunnii*
Indigofera australis
Daviesia latifolia and *ulicifolia*
Epacris impressa
Lissanthe strigosa
Astroloma humifusum
Cyathodes glauca
Olearia argophylla and *viscosa*
Bedfordia salicina
Ozothamnus ferrugineus and *obcordatus*
Coprosma quadrifida
Zieria arborescens
Asterotrichion discolor
Pittosporum bicolor

Monocots

Dianella tasmanica
Lomandra longifolia
Drymophila cyanocarpa
Poa spp.
Lepidosperma sp.
Juncus pallidus and *Juncus* sp.
Ghania sp.

Ferns

Blechnum nudum
Polystichum proliferum
Dicksonia antarctica
Pteridium esculentum
Rumohra adiantiformis
Histiopteris incisa

See back page for an illustrated invertebrates list

Shipstern Bluff Excursion

Sunday 15th. March

Sixteen Field Nats attended the Shipstern Bluff outing. The drive down took some of us less time than expected. The weather for the day was fine after a little rain in the morning on the way down, which left the forests nicely damp. The walk is almost 5 km each way, with an uphill start followed by descents of various steepness, but the track is mostly very well manicured and has several nice-looking and functional bench seats. Some care is needed to avoid tripping over exposed tree roots in one section.



On the track down to Shipstern Bluff
 Photograph: Geoff Carle

Mostly we made a pretty good pace on the way out, following the sensibly radical suggestion of new President Annabel that we aim to do most of the naturalising on the way back to ensure that we reached our destination at all! A couple of spectacular stinkhorn fungi (*Aseroe rubra*) were one of the few sightings to slow down the whole party early on.

The track starts in damp to wet eucalypt forest on sandstone, then passes through *Eucalyptus obliqua* forests on dolerite and sandstone, with one patch of *E. tenuiramis* on dolerite and also some *E. globulus*. As the walk continues the forests get lower and lower; in places the forest is only five metres tall. Eventually we came into an area of teatree and heath that might be a great spot for jewel beetles at the height of flowering on a warm day. The bluff itself is made of crumbly mudstone, chunks of which have famously fallen off now and then, and it's a fairly steep scramble down the steps past some amazingly old and thick *Bedfordia* to the shore. Six of us made it down to the wild rocky coast at the base while some of the party took the fairly brief side trip to Tunnel Bay instead. The lunch site presents a great panorama of geology - the mudstone of the bluff, the opposing sandstone capped with dolerite, and the dolerite columns of Cape Raoul.



Giant Bedfordia
Photograph: Kevin Bonham

A fauna highlight was a young echidna which was seen by many of us as it excavated around the lookout, spending over an hour digging holes in a very successful search for ants. A couple of cute young slightly tame (and probably frequently fed) pademelons were also seen early in the walk. A single

yellow-tailed black cockatoo made a great amount of noise at one point prior to flying away rapidly. On our return there was a single Beautiful Firetail among the various fairy wrens, robins and thornbills, but it was not that keen on showing itself at close quarters (Abbey has renamed this species "Bashful Firetail").

Kevin Bonham

Fungi (Genevieve Gates)

Agaricus 'marzipan'
Agaricus aff. *augustus*
Amanita ochrophyloides group
Aseroe rubra
Bolete 'Stephen'
Boletellus obscurecoccineus
Bovista sp.
Coprinellus aff. *disseminatus*
Gymnopilus allantopus
Gymnopus 'dryophilus'
Gymnopus 'brown frilly'
Hohenbuehlia sp.
Laccaria sp.
Lepiota haemorrhagica
Marasmius elegans
Mycena austrofilopes
Pisolithus sp.
Psilocybe subaeruginosa
Russula marangania
Stropharia formosa
Tremella fuciformis
Trogia aff. *straminea*
Xerocomus aff. *subtomentosus*

Snails (Kevin Bonham)

Caryodes dufresnii
Tasmaphena sinclairi
Gratilaoma sp "Knocklofty"
Pedicamista sp "Southport" (a south-eastern endemic common along rough coasts)
Scelidoropa officeri
Magilaoma sp "Tasmania"
Planilaoma luckmanii (unusually - this species is not normally found in coastal shrubbery).
 Plus exotic slug *Arion intermedius* in the carpark.

Orchids in flower (Kevin Bonham)

Chiloglottis reflexa
Eriochilus cucullatus
Pterostylis parviflora



Chiloglottis reflexa Autumn Bird Orchid
Photograph: Geoff Carle



Tunnel Bay and view from Shipstern Bluff steps
Photographer: Geoff Carle

Invertebrates (Amanda Thomson)

- Velvet ant - *Ephutomorpha porrectriceps* (Mutillidae)
- Darkling Beetle - *Saragus costatus*
- Gum Tree Shield Bug - *Omyta centrolineata*
- Caterpillar, unidentified

Flies

- Beefly - Tribe *Villini*
- Bumble Bee - *Bombus terrestris*
- Bird of Paradise fly - (Callipappidae), dead 'stuck' to twig
- Broad-mouthed, antler fly - *Duomyia decora* (Platystomatidae)
- Bristle flies - *Eurygastrosis tasmaniae* – white-bottomed fly (Tachinidae)
- Long-legged *Stenostoma* sp (Tachinidae)
- Lots of Red velvet mites

Wasps

- Native Flower Wasp – female *Thynnus zonatus*, (Tiphidae), being eaten by ants (?Dolichoderinae)
- Spider Wasp, Tribe Ageniellini – pending ID,
- Auplopus-Fabriogenia-Phanagenia complex (Pompilidae)

Birds (Vicki and Richard von Witt)

- Wedge-tail eagle (a pair)
- Swamp harrier (a pair) ?
- Superb blue wren
- Thornbill Forest raven
- Green rosella
- Scarlet robin (male and female)
- Beautiful firetail
- Along the track
- Yellow-tailed black cockatoo
- Crescent honeyeater (calling on path down to Shipstern Bluff)
- Australian gannet (down at Shipstern Bluff)



Shipstern Bluff view nearly at the lookout
Photograph: Geoff Carle



Shipstern from lookout
Photographer: Kevin Bonham

Presidents April/May Briefing

The Clubs' 2020 AGM was completed on 5th March just before COVID-19 required us to 'Stay at Home'. The Club has been very fortunate to have a number of long serving committee members and the Club owes them our grateful thanks. This year Kevin Bonham stepped down after six years from his second stint as President, but he remains on the committee as our new Librarian, a new role for him! Kevin has been continuously on our committee since 1988. Genevieve Gates, our Vice President for the last four years, has retired from the committee. Genevieve has been on our committee for 19 of the years between 1993-2019 during which she held almost every position except Treasurer. Amanda Thomson, our re-elected 'Walks and Talks' committee member, has served in that role since 1995. This year is her Silver Anniversary!

We thank retiring members Abbey Throssell and Margaret Williams for their past service on the committee. We are pleased that our Treasurer Jane Catchpole and Secretary Margaret Warren have agreed to continue on our committee. Margaret's Annual Secretary's Report for the 2020 AGM can be found on our website at <https://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/membership/>

Annabel Carle is officially the new President but is effectively job sharing the role with our new Vice President Anna McEldowney. This is strictly a one-year arrangement as we are hopeful some younger members of the Club will take on some Club responsibilities in 2021. We already have begun this process with our three new committee members Eddie Gall, Lynne Maher and Sabine Borgis and we thank them for their commitment.

At the 2021 AGM Mick and Deirdre Brown will retire as the Tas Naturalist and Bulletin Editors respectively; they will be big shoes to fill, but Sabine Borgis will understudy their roles in 2020, with Mick retaining scientific oversight.

During our year Anna and I plan to manage the Club in a 'as steady as she goes' mode. That was our intention - little did we think that almost our first role would be, thanks to COVID-19, to cancel the April and May Speakers and Excursions. It seems highly likely at this time of writing that June and most likely the July excursion and speakers will also be cancelled, but confirmation will be made on our website by mid-May 2020 and via an email to members.

Some of you who usually receive the Bulletin as a hard copy, but have an email address, will be receiving it as an email during the COVID-19 pandemic. This will mean Deirdre, our Bulletin Editor does not have to make a trip to Officeworks to get it photocopied.

We hope you will understand this decision by the Committee.

The Club will continue its a-political position, but from time to time we will give notice on our website of other non-Club events that members may choose to participate in. These will be found in our Citizen Science page at <https://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/citizen-science/>

In mid-March we welcomed back Don Hird, one of our Life Members, safe and well from his cycling trip around SE Asia, although he had to serve two weeks in quarantine before he was allowed to return to his home.

It seems a long time ago now but the 2019 committee also agreed at their February meeting that we should provide a list of recommended items members should carry on our excursions. This is advertised on our website at <https://tasfieldnats.org.au/data/documents/TFNC-Excursion-carry-list.pdf> and it is also printed later in this Bulletin. It will also be included in our welcome letter for new members.

The 2020 committee completed their April committee meeting successfully via email during which they agreed to purchase some TFNC china coffee mugs printed with our Club platypus logo and name. We plan to give each speaker a mug in addition to our 2004 biography 'A Century Afield'. In due course members will also be able to purchase them for \$10 each.

Meanwhile keep field naturalising on your walks in your local area. But please also begin to think what you can contribute to the July Bulletin. A quiz? Topics of interest seen on walks in your local area? We are also hoping thanks to Clare Hawkins, to include a step by step article for members on 'How to use iNaturalist' and will follow it up with a hands-on workshop when we are allowed to meet again or maybe as Clare suggests a Zoom session!

Stay safe and well

Annabel Carle and Anna McEldowney

2020 ANN cancelled

We have received a letter from Liz Bourne on behalf of the Stanthorpe Field Naturalist Club Australian Naturalists Network 2020 Organising Committee announcing the cancellation of 2020 ANN get-together planned for this September in Stanthorpe.

If it is agreeable to the Australian Naturalists' Network Steering Committee, the Stanthorpe group is hoping to offer the get-together at about the same time in 2022.

RECOMMENDED ITEMS TO BE TAKEN ON ALL TFNC EXCURSIONS

- Waterproof jacket and over-pants
- Thermal jacket or equivalent
- Charged mobile phone (with additional backup charger if necessary)
 - Either c/w with Apps for Maps/Compass/GPS
 - or if no mobile coverage OR a phone, please carry relevant Maps and a Compass
- Pack cover
- Water and food
- Sun hat/beanie/gloves
- Sunscreen/lip balm 50+
- Insect repellent (for leeches, mozzies etc.)
- Head torch/mirror/penknife/whistle/waterproof matches or lighter
- Small personal first aid kit (see suggested list below)

Plus the following may help make your walk more enjoyable

- Gaiters
- Sunglasses
- Sit mat
- Hot thermos drink
- Walking poles

Suggested Personal First Aid items (carry in waterproof covering)

- Band-aids – various sizes
- 2 x heavy compression/elasticised bandages 75-100mm wide inc. clips (for sprains, snakebites)
- Adhesive tape – non stretch (strapping sprained ankles and holding dressings in place)
- Triangular bandage (slings/padding/bandage)
- 3 x small sterile dressings or equivalent (for use as eye pads; wound covering & cleaning etc.)
- Space-blanket (protection against elements/heat loss)
- Pain relieving tablets (paracetamol, ibuprofen)
- Antihistamine/Stingose
- Antiseptic – powder/spray/gel or wipes for cleaning wounds etc.
- Small notebook and pencil

PLUS ANY PERSONAL MEDICALLY PRESCRIBED DRUGS YOU MAY REQUIRE

A new book in our library

Caterpillars, Moths and their Plants of Southern Australia by Peter McQuillan

Look for a review in a later edition of the TFNC Bulletin



Young echidna at Shipstern Lookout
Photograph: Geoff Carle

An illustrated invertebrates list from Cascades excursion

All photos by Amanda Thomson



Jewel bug- *Scutiphora pedicellata*



Miturgidae - *Elassoctenus* sp



Male Velvet Ant



Thomisidae, *Australomisidia pilula* female



Crambidae moth, *Hednota relatalis* (L)
Spider, orb weaver *Plebs bradleyi* (R)



Tachinid fly



Undescribed orbweaver



Crambidae, *Metasia capnochroa*



Ant *Pheidole* spp



Stiphidae, *Stiphidion facetum*



Klugs Xenica - *Geitoneura klugii*

About The Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club

We encourage the study of natural history and support conservation. People of any age and background are welcome as members.

For more information, visit our website

<https://tasfieldnats.org.au/>

or email secretary@tasfieldnats.org.au or

write to: GPO Box 68, Hobart, 7001

Subscriptions are:

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by cheque to the Club address,

by Paypal (follow the links on our website or EFT to the Club account:

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Editor: Deirdre Brown

Your articles and photos for the Bulletin are welcome. Please email to the editor at

tfn.bulletin.editor@gmail.com



Crane fly? *Limoniidae*? short-palped Crane Fly