



Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club Inc.

BULLETIN

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Quarterly Bulletin

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The Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club encourages the study of natural history and supports conservation. People of any age and background are welcome as members.

For more information, visit website <http://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/>; email info@tasfieldnats.org.au; write to GPO Box 68, Hobart, 7001; or phone our secretary on (03)62278638.

We welcome articles and interesting photos for the Bulletin. If you would like to contribute to the next edition, please email the editor with your article or photos by 15 June.

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Program

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, meeting at 9.00 am outside the Museum in Macquarie St, Hobart. Bring lunch and all-weather outdoor gear. If you are planning to attend an outing, but have not been to the prior meeting, please confirm the details on the club website as late changes are sometimes made.

Sun 19 April	Excursion: Cape Deslacs. Meet outside the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery on Macquarie Street, Hobart at 9am or at the Clifton Beach turnoff at 9:30am.
Thur 7 May	Guest Speaker: Clare Hawkins, <i>Finding out about the Fossa – tropical rainforest carnivore of Madagascar</i>
Sat 9 May	Excursion: Mt Misery, Ranelagh
Thur 4 June	Guest Speaker: TBA
Sun 7 June	Excursion: The Springs, Mt Wellington
Thur 2 July	Guest Speaker: Gustav Hallegraf, <i>Ocean climate change, phytoplankton, community responses and harmful algal blooms.</i>

For details of talks and excursions beyond this date, please check the website at <http://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/>

Subscriptions for 2015 are due now!

Subs can be paid by cheque to the Club address, by Paypal (follow the links on our website <http://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/>) or by EFT to the Club account BSB 067 102 A/c 2800 0476. Please identify your payment with your name and initial.

Family \$35 Single \$30 Single Junior or Concession \$25

Mienna Jewel Beetle Excursion

Don Hird

Sunday February 8 2015

This excursion was at risk of being repetitious, being the fifth in a series of annual excursions seeking the sometimes elusive Mienna jewel beetle, *Castiarina insculpta*.

The backstory is that this beautiful species was collected twice in the 1940s, described, but not recorded again for more than 50 years. Thus it was officially extinct at that time but then the odd dead specimen started to turn up. Our first club excursions were exploratory but based on inferred biology of the species. For the first couple of years we were unsuccessful, although a valuable result was the finding of another rarity, *Castiarina rudis*, at Lake Augusta. Then, in 2013, we discovered Mienna Jewel Beetles in large numbers at Liawennee initially, and subsequently over a range of tens of kilometres from there. Our strategy had been to vary our excursions in time over the January/February period thought to be the adult flight season for the species. These results were reported in the 2013 *Tasmanian Naturalist*. In 2014 we again searched for the species but despite now knowing its host species, the daisy bush *Ozothamnus hookeri*, we were unable to find it. Several jewel beetles and other insect species are known to appear only at multi-year intervals, but clearly mystery was still involved.



Ozothamnus hookeri. Photo: Lani Elliott

So, on a bright sunny day, ideal for adult jewel beetle activity, eight of us set out. By now we are using the Lake Augusta Rd turnoff at Liawennee, the site of our 2013 discovery, as our reference location. We arrived there greeted by the bright blossoms of many daisy bushes and within a few minutes had again found numerous Mienna jewel beetles. We had been encouraged by earlier reports of sightings this summer and were not disappointed. The mystery has become; will Mienna jewel beetles appear consistently at two year intervals into the future?



Mienna jewel beetle (Castiarina insculpta)

Photo: Amanda Thomson

We also turned up *Castiarina rudis* and the locally restricted Golden Cockroach near Lake Ada.



Golden cockroach. Photo: Lani Elliott



Relaxing at Lake Ada. Photo: Lani Elliott

This activity has to some extent assumed project status. In future years we will be looking for further evidence of episodic appearance of Mienna jewel beetles and more details of its life history. We may overnight at Mienna to allow more exploration time on the plateau.

Calverts Beach Excursion March 2015

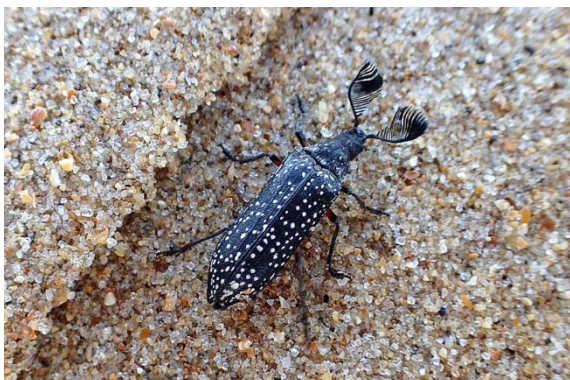
Greg and Beth Heap

On a perfect Tasmanian Autumn day, 13 enthusiastic Field Nats set out for a day on Calverts Beach hoping to find some Bristletails. The temperature was mild, the wind light and the surf was up! We saw many surfers enjoying the great waves as we walked along to our first hunting ground at the North East end of the beach.



Field Nats on a mission. Photo: Beth Heap

Lani and Pete took up the rear as Lani found many interesting things to photograph along the beach.



Feathered-horned Beetle (*Rhipicera* sp.) Photo: Lani Elliott



Empty egg capsules (*Dicathais orbita*). Photo: Lani Elliott

Despite much poking in cracks in the rocks with bits of grass, the Bristletails remained elusive at this site. However, not to be deterred, we climbed the headland to enjoy the marvelous views and move towards our next hunting ground. We were distracted by the majesty

of the place and decided to have morning tea on the headland.



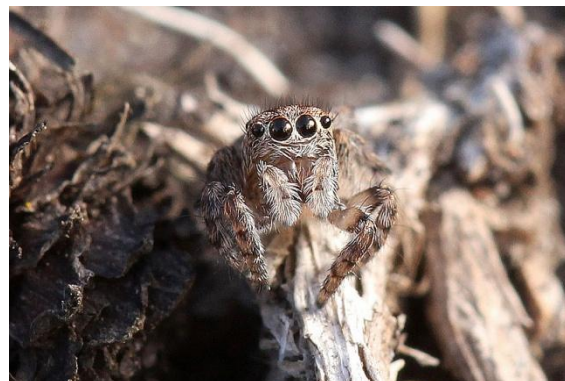
Looking for Bristletails. Photo: Beth Heap



On the headland at Calverts Beach. Photos: Geoff Carle

Whilst there, we were treated to a close fly-over by a juvenile Wedge-tailed Eagle. With our cameras NOT at the ready, we all pretty much missed the opportunity for a fabulous shot.

A number of spiders were observed by Amanda Thomson, including two *Salticidae* jumping spiders, two *Artoria* sp. wolf spiders, and a *Dysderidae* spider repairing its silk retreat with its 'bottom' up secreting silk from its spinnerets. Some mating Meadow Argus butterflies (*Junonia villida*) were seen and an Australian Bagmoth was found on a blade of grass on the headland.



A little Salticid. Photo: Amanda Thomson



Geoff with Meadow argus. Photo: Amanda Thomson



Meadow argus *Junonia villida*. Photo: Geoff Carle

While up on the headland, we saw a smaller cove on the other side, which we decided would be a good spot to continue our search for Bristletails.



The Cove. Photo: Lani Elliott

At the far end of the cove we struck it rich with a very productive "colony" of Bristletails hiding in the crevices in the rocks quite close to the water's edge. Finding proved to be much easier than photographing but a very determined Geoff Carle eventually got some good shots of the uncooperative little critters.



Bristletails (*Allomachilis froggatti*). Photos: Geoff Carle

Greg went another 50 meters away from the main find and managed to locate another Bristletail. Beth captured a close up photo of its "face" and a bit of video as well.



The "face" of a Bristletail. Photo: Beth Heap

After a hard morning of Bristletail hunting we had lunch and enjoyed the surroundings before heading back to the car park and home.

Kevin Bonham has since confirmed the identity of the Bristletails that we found as *Allomachilis froggatti*.



Lunch on the beach. Photo: Beth Heap



View across Calverts Beach to Iron Pot. Photo: Amanda Thomson

Photographic contributions to the record of the day's activities can be posted to Flickr – Tag "2015_Mar_Calverts_Beach". These can all be seen on the Club web site "2015-excursions" page.

From the President

Kevin Bonham

This year's AGM held on 5 March attracted a bumper crowd of 45 members (must have been the bristletails!) A new committee was elected, unopposed in the end, though at one stage we could have had as many as three elections. (Can any of the older members remember when the club last had a contested election? Has it even ever happened?) My thanks to retiring committee members Kristi Ellingsen (who stood in for me at two committee meetings and two general meetings during a year as Vice-President) and Geoff Carle. Greg Heap moves from General Committee to Vice-President, Anke Frank is a new General Committee member, and Jane Catchpole and Beth Heap rejoin the committee as General Committee members having also served in 2009 and 2013 respectively. Beth is also standing in for Deirdre as guest editor for this issue of the Newsletter. My thanks also to Sue Smillie and Sabine Borgis who both nominated for the committee but in the end decided not to stand.

Some comments were made at the AGM suggesting that the club rules need revising, and the committee has decided to conduct a review and call for submissions from interested members (see separate announcement).

Last year was one of the club's busiest, most challenging and most successful years. The success of the Australian Naturalist Network gathering was covered in the last edition and another great success has been the publication of Genevieve Gates' and David Ratkowsky's landmark and much needed work "A Field Guide to Tasmanian Fungi". Merely making this book available even at a fair financial loss would have been the sort of thing the club exists to do, but in fact it made its money back so rapidly that we had recovered all our costs well under a year after its release, and are well placed to look at other projects. One of these, that was explored while Mike Driessen was President but has been on the back burner for a couple of years, is the provision of small grants to fund student and citizen science research in Tasmanian natural history. We are always open to

suggestions on what we should spend our money on, since every book we publish seems to soon enough make a profit leaving us looking for other things to do with it all.

Other highlights of 2014 included a successful Easter Camp near Fingal and the release of a whopper 196-page edition of the Tasmanian Naturalist. Editor Mark Wapstra suggests it is "easily the most exciting and varied edition" he's presided over in his time; I'd suggest ever! It's quite something to track the growth of our humble journal from stapled quarterly eight-page booklets, to the first annual edition twenty years ago (60 pp with one black and white photo) to the publication that we have today.

We welcome suggestions for outings and talks. Suggestions for Easter camp venues are especially welcome. We decided not to have an Easter Camp this year to give ourselves time to recharge from 2014's endeavours, but we will probably hold one in 2016. Also if newer club members see anywhere mentioned in old outing reports and think "that sounds like an interesting place!" let us know.

Thanks to all committee members for their work for the club over the past year and perennial thanks to Betty Brettingham-Moore for maintaining our tea and supper supply.

president@tasfieldnats.org.au



Kevin looking for snails. Photo: Beth Heap

Review of Club Rules – Call for Submissions

Kevin Bonham, President

During the recent AGM some concerns were raised about the current club rules (for instance, some members thought the rules should allow more flexibility about the size of the committee). Also over the past year, some committee members have suggested that the rules are in need of a general review. The club rules (which can be downloaded from the club's website at <http://tasfieldnats.weebly.com/club-rules.html>) were last revised in the early 1990s.

At its April meeting the committee passed a motion to conduct a review of the club rules. We are interested to hear from any members, including committee members, who believe that the club rules should be changed or clarified. Submissions are open until the end of July. After that we intend that submissions received will be referred to a rules subcommittee which will prepare a report outlining what suggestions have been made and recommending any changes considered desirable. The subcommittee will include the current President and may include members who are not on the current committee.

Any proposed changes to the rules will be put as special resolutions to a general meeting as required under the current rules. This means that all members will receive at least 21 days notice of the proposed changes, and at least three-quarters of members present at the meeting must vote in favour of any proposed change for that change to be made. Ideally, we would like any changes that are going to be made to be in place by next year's AGM.

We are seeking suggestions in these three categories:

* Do members believe we are legally required to add, remove or change anything? If so, please state clearly

what precise sections of what laws require us to make changes and why.

* Are there any rules that members believe we should add, remove or change? If so, in each case please say not just which current rule (if any) should be changed but also how it should be changed and why. (This could be a recommended revised wording or a suggestion as to what the proposed change should achieve).

* Are there any club rules that members think are not clear enough, and would like us to clarify, without necessarily changing them?

The current club rules are closely adapted from the model rules for incorporated associations that were available when the club incorporated. Since then the model rules have changed slightly. The current version of the model rules is available for reference at http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/tas/consol_reg/airr2007530/sch1.html There is no requirement to adopt the model rules.

Submissions will be seen by the committee and the rules subcommittee, but we won't publish them. The subcommittee's report will be made available to members and may include quotes from, or summaries of, submissions with identifying information removed.

Submissions can be as short or as long (within reason) as you wish, and don't have to address all the above issues. Please send submissions by email to president@tasfieldnats.org.au, post them to me at 410 Macquarie Street, South Hobart Tas 7004, or give them to me at the May, June or July meetings if I am there.