

# TASMANIAN FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INC.

established 1904.

## BULLETIN

<http://www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/tasfield.html>

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### **Bulletin No. 312 (quarterly) October 2003**

The Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club encourages the study of natural history and supports conservation. We issue our journal The Tasmanian Naturalist annually in October. People with a range of ages, background and knowledge are welcome as members.

Contact Genevieve Gates (6227 8638) for further information or write to GPO Box 68, Hobart, 7001.

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#### **Programme**

General Meetings start at 7.45 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month, in the Life Science Building at the University of Tasmania. Outings are usually held the following weekend, meeting outside the to the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery entrance in Macquarie Street. Bring lunch and all?weather outdoor gear.

If you are planning to attend an outing but have not been to the prior meeting, phone to check as to the timing of the excursion (with Genevieve Gates; 62 278 638 or Don Hird; 62 289 702). Unforeseen changes sometimes occur.

**Thurs. 6 November 7.45p.m.:** Randy Rose from Univ. Tasmania Zoology will speak on the biology of the Tasmanian Bettong.

**Sat. 8 November 9.00a.m.** Depart from the Museum for Esperance River, a reserve near Dover. This is a general excursion in the far south of Tasmania to look for a variety of species including fungi and invertebrates. The river is very pleasant, especially if the weather is kind.

**Thurs. 4 December 7.45p.m.:** Members' Night. Members are encouraged to give a presentation of up to 15 minutes on a natural history subject. Please let Genevieve (6227 8638) know of your presentation topic in advance if possible, so that the night can be planned. We also have a Christmas supper; please bring a plate.

**Sun. 7 December 7.00a.m.** A snorkelling/beachcombing excursion is planned to Kingston Beach area. Earlier in the year sea-dragons could be easily seen here and sea-tulips are a local feature.

### **Is There History in Your Cupboards?**

In Spring 2004 the TFNC will celebrate its centenary. To mark this milestone we plan to publish a book about the Club's history. We have good records covering the hundred years, much of it housed in the Tasmanian Archives, but to add colour and interest to the book we plan to include photographs of camps, outings, memorabilia etc. as well as anecdotes and detail remembered by various club members. Janet Fenton, the club's librarian, has been contracted to write the book. If any members have reminiscences, photographs or memorabilia they would like to see included in this history, please contact Janet on ph 6239 6443 or fenton@southcom.com.au or write to the Club, Box 68, GPO Hobart 7001.

**For The Tasmanian Naturalist, 2004, we intend to publish a list of particularly interesting or unusual observations from club members.** So, please make a special effort to record your observations in the Record Book, and remind the President to pass it around at meetings. by Genevieve Gates.

### **With sadness, we report the passing of three members:**

Kelsey Aves. Joyce Tagg and David Cowie.

Short obituaries including details of their contribution to our club, will appear in the next Bulletin.

### **Easter camp for 2004**

We have booked accommodation at Koonya from Friday, 9th April until Tuesday, 13th April. We could visit Bangor (Lagoon Bay area, venue for first ever TFNC Easter Camp) on the way down, go botanizing at McGregor's peak, seal watching from Cape Raoul, surfing (naturalising surfing!) at Roaring Beach or Eaglehawk Neck etc.

This will be our 100th year as a club; come for all or part or a day.

More details in the next bulletin in February. Cost is \$12.50 /bed/night but camping and use of facilities may cost less.

**The Tasmanian Marine Naturalists Association** has organised a parent/child day for November 22nd, to spend the morning at the wonderful Woodbridge Marine Discovery Centre, followed by an exploration of the rocky reef at Verona Sands during the low tide. This is advertised in the latest Adult Education bulletin (although for the wrong date) and on their website. Due to low enrolments this course will be cancelled soon if we do not get the minimum number. Please enrol on the website as soon as possible to prevent loss of this opportunity for parents to share with their children in learning about our wonderful marine environment. The parents enjoy this day out as much as the children!

**Jane Elek** President, Tas Marine Naturalists Association

### **EXCURSION REPORTS**

#### **Hospital Creek Reserve; August 9**

Hospital Creek is a small nature reserve between Sandspit River and Kellevie, declared in the late 1970s to protect rare plants, including *Eucalyptus brookeriana*. We followed the end of Franklins Rd up from about 1.5 km from its junction with Kellevie Road until the junction with the main Wielangta Rd.- as such most of our walk was actually outside the reserve boundaries. The outing didn't draw a big crowd, but the half a dozen of us who braved the weather (actually it was surprisingly pleasant) were very fortunate to have the company of botanist Alex Buchanan, who was able to point out all the unusual plants in the area. Some which I found particularly interesting were *Odixia* (a rare Compositae with stems continuing to grow out through the flowering heads), *Dodenea ericifolia* (from the tiny thin leaves you

would never guess this was related to the common *Dodonea viscosa*, but the seedpods give the game away - seeing these two very different congeners growing together was quite surreal) and an unusual shrubby Olearia with leaves shaped like those of a waratah. The walk passed through a range of dry sclerophyll forests with one small riparian forest gully. In the latter I found a nice orchid growing under a rock (!) *Corybas incurvus*.

David and Genevieve found a few dozen species of fungi, Qug continued to produce copepods out of the tiniest splashes of water, and I racked up a very decent tally of 12 snails: *Tasmaphena quaestiosa* (the east coast replacement for the common *T. sinclairi*), *Prolesophanta nelsonensis*, *Caryodes dufresnii*, *Bothriembryon tasmanicus*, *Paralaoma mucoides*, *P. halli*, *Laomavix collisi*, *Elsothera ricei*, *Allocharopa legrandi*, *A. kershawi*, *Thryasona diemenensis*, *Helicarion cuvieri*.

**Kevin Bonham**

**Fungi Lists for Hospital Creek and Waterworks (July) will be held over until January. Waterworks Reserve; September 6 Don Hird**

Spotlighting at the Waterworks Reserve in South Hobart revealed many Brush Possums, Barred Bandicoots, bats hawking over the reservoir, a Bennett's Wallaby and ringtail possum. Don Hird

**Coal River Gorge, Sunday 5th October, 2003 Amanda Thomson**

Following David Leaman's guide (Step into History in Tasmania's Reserves) about 15 of us proceeded to the Coal River Gorge Nature Reserve via Rhyndaston. The 'small grassy parking area' was just that, luckily we found interested neighbours Lisa and Andrew who very kindly allowed us to park on their land. We followed an old vehicular track initially, then passed through light scrub to the impressive gorge cliff face. En route identifying many birds - often through calls, fungi (including morells!) plants and native orchids. The area is a significant remnant of sandstone with Eucalyptus obliqua stands. We spotted at least 3 large stick nests high in obliques. One certainly looked large enough to be a wedge-tailed eagle's, the others possibly forest raven's. We lunched high on a 'lookout' while the tree martins performed their aerial acrobatics over the canyon for us. A scouting party established the best route down - further upriver. A scramble to the bottom found the banks ravaged by the recent flooding rain, manferms, lots of wattle out and to our delight a platypus who swam, floated, ducked and dived past us all. It made a huge splash when surprised by Don's voice suspended on a branch directly above. A great day, enjoyed by two new members Jane and Stewart, and shared with local residents Lisa and Andrew who also may join us sometime.

**Fungi List (Coal River Gorge, Sunday 5th October, 2003)**

<i>Bovista</i> sp.	<i>Castoreum cretaceum</i>	<i>Clitocybe clitocyboides</i>
<i>Cortinarius</i> sp., brown	<i>Descolea recedens</i>	<i>Discinella terrestris</i>
<i>Jafneadelphus ferrugineus</i>	<i>Laccaria</i> sp.	* <i>Morchella elata</i>
<i>Mycena carmeliana</i>	<i>Nidula niveotomentosa</i>	* <i>Omphalina chromacea</i>
<i>Omphalina umbellifera</i>	<i>Panellus stipticus</i>	<i>Pluteus cervinus</i>
<i>Psathyrella</i> sp.	* <i>Stereum hirsutum</i>	<i>Stereum illudens</i>
<i>Thelephora terrestris</i>	<i>Trametes versicolor</i>	

Note: \*Indicates a FUNGIMAP species David Ratkowsky

**Bird List; TFNC trip to Coal River Gorge, 5/10/03**

Grey Currawong	<i>Strepera versicolor</i>	Grey Shrike-thrush	<i>Colluricincla harmonica</i>
Spotted Pardalote	<i>Pardalotus punctatus</i>	Striated Pardalote	<i>Pardalotus striatus</i>
Crescent Honeyeater	<i>Phylidonyris pyrrhoptera</i>	Yellow Throated Honeyeater	<i>Lichenostomus flavicollis</i>
Grey Fantail	<i>Rhipidura fuliginosa</i>	Strong-billed Honeyeater	<i>Melithreptus validirostris</i>
Scarlet Robin	<i>Petroica multicolor</i>	Flame Robin	<i>Petroica phoenicea</i>
Dusky Robin	<i>Melanodryas vittata</i>	Forest Raven	<i>Corvus tasmanicus</i>
Tree Martin	<i>Cecropis nigricans</i>	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus pyrrhophanus</i>
Kookaburra	<i>Dacelo gigas</i>	Golden Whistler	<i>Pachycephala pectoralis</i>
Thornbill (species not identified).			

Two medium stick nests were seen and a grass and bark nest (not in use) in a low rock cave. Bird life abundant judging by the calls.  
Janet and Geoff Fenton

**Snail list for Coal River Gorge:** *Caryodes dufresnii*, *Paralaoma mucoides*, *P. halli*, *Laomavix collisi*, *Elsothera ricei*, *Prolesophanta nelsonensis*.  
Kevin Bonham

**Blue Gum / Swift Parrot Survey**

Dr Stephen Mallick from DPIWE is currently working on the swift parrot with the Nature Conservation Branch in Hobart. We are interested in the role played by blue gums in north-east Tasmania and *Eucalyptus ovata* (anywhere in Tas) as a food source for swift parrots. Over the last ten years we have been following the flowering pattern of blue gums in south east Tas, but have no information on Blue-gum flowering patterns in the north-west, and nothing at all on *E. ovata* flowering.

To gather this information, Stephen is setting up a database of observers who spend time in the bush and are likely to notice blue gums or *E. ovata* flowering. The idea is to get observers to apply a crude scale to describe flowering:

Questions : was flowering of blue gum in the north west this spring? –  
: was flowering of *E. ovata* this spring? -

- 0 very light <1% of maximum
- 1 light 1-10% of maximum
- 2 moderate 11-25% of maximum
- 3 heavy 25-50% of maximum
- 4 very heavy >50% of maximum

The idea is that the observer keeps in mind the blue-gum/*E. ovata* flowering as they drive or walk around where blue-gums (mainly 5 km from coast, Launceston to Smithton) or black gums occur. Obviously the flowering may vary from place to place, but what we are interested in is a general index for Blue-gums for the whole NW area, and for *E. ovata* for Statewide. If the observer can keep some notes about where they see flowering, even better. But in the end it is the single figure index we are after. Ideally we need people who have spent some years in Tasmania, and who have noticed the blue gum/black gum flowering over the years, and can give a relative value for flowering in a particular year.

I wonder if your Tas Field Nats members may be able to assist me with this endeavour. I would very much appreciate your informing anyone who may be interested in taking part, and getting them to contact me. My idea was to compile a list of willing observers, and in late October ring everyone and quiz them on flowering for the spring. I have an information sheet which details all the above which I can send on to anyone interested.

### **The d'Entrecasteaux Garden**

In 1791 a French expedition spent some weeks in southern Tasmania, undertaking scientific research and replenishing supplies. As well as collecting many new species (many named by la Billardiere) and giving names to local features, they established a vegetable garden on a peninsula near Reserche Bay. The expedition is also renowned for its documented and illustrated contact with Tasmanian aboriginals; it is estimated that around a quarter of known information about the original Tasmanians is derived from this source.

Recent news reports indicate that much of the area close to the site of the rediscovered garden is to be logged. Against this, highly reputed experts such as Professor John Mulvaney and the historian Ed. Duyker have indicated that the peninsula on which the garden is located is highly significant and worthy of reservation. The area concerned would be around 150 ha. This area is the type locality for many species and, together with its ethnographic significance, would be a small but extremely valuable addition to our reserve system. Amidst the damage already wrought by woodchip our reputation for wanton destruction of natural features would only be exacerbated if intervention for reservation does not occur.

**Don Hird**