



Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club Inc.

BULLETIN

Editor: Deirdre Brown bul.editor@tasfieldnats.org.au

Quarterly Bulletin

No 360

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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 12 January 2016.

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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.

Thurs Nov.5th.	Guest Speaker: Karen Richards — The Life History of <i>Catadromus lacordairei</i> (the green-lined ground beetle) in Tasmania.
Sun 8th Nov.	Excursion: The Thumbs, east coast
Thurs Dec. 3rd.	Member's Night. Members are invited to present observations from the past year, but please let Kevin know at or before the November meeting so he can co-ordinate contributions.
Sat. Dec.5th.	Club BBQ — Mt Misery carpark. Meet at Grove store 9:30 am to car pool, and at Mt Misery carpark at 10 am for a walk before the BBQ. Bring everything you need for BBQ.

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

Subscriptions

A reminder that 2015 subs were due on 1 January, and 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

Vale Marjorie Wall

The Tasmanian Field Naturalists club notes the recent death of Marjorie Wall, a much-loved Life Member.

Marjorie was a member of the club for 69 years, friend to all, and friend to all the orchids and birds. The club sends our condolences to her family.

At the December meeting Janet Fenton will give a presentation of Marjorie's participation in club activities to celebrate her long membership.

Addition to July excursion report

The species list for the July Outing to Cape Contrariety, compiled by Genevieve Gates, was inadvertently left out of the July Bulletin and is included here.



Flame Robin
Photo Mick Brown

Birds

Flame robin
Hooded plover
Pied oystercatcher
Sooty oystercatcher
White-breasted sea eagle
Silvereye
Crescent honeyeater
Snails (just the shells)
Caryodes dufresnii
Bothriembryon tasmanicus — a significant find for Kevin as it has previously only been found on Betsy Island
Theba pisana

Spider

Female wolf spider with young on her back

Fungi

Bovista sp.
Chlorociboria aeruginascens
Clavulinopsis amoena
Geastrum triplex
Hygrocybe aff. *firma*
Hygrocybe rodwayi
Mycena clarkeana
Stropharia aff. *semiglobata* (on dung)
Tricholoma sp.

Flowering plants

Acacia mucronata
Astroloma humifusum
Bossiaea cinerea
Epacris impressa (white)

Genevieve Gates

Excursion to Boronia Hill, Kingston

8th August 2015

(10 members attended)

Boronia Hill behind suburban Kingston and Blackman's Bay is a reserve of dry eucalypt forest that was funded by a group of local women from the proceeds of the sale of their craft shop. It provides a sunny interlude for an excursion during winter when roads are icy and daylight hours are short.

Kevin, Abbey, Don, Vicki, Gen and David fronted up at the Dorset Rd entrance wondering where our fellow naturalists Amanda, John and Jane had got to, didn't they put their hands up at the general meeting? Gen and David were a bit late having made a detour to Blackman's Bay to collect a polypore growing on a stump in a chook pen. A mobile phone call to Kevin revealed the whereabouts of the other 3 naturalists so we set off and then Sheila popped up from a driveway as she lives next door to this entrance to the reserve.

The first find was a mangy, on-the-way-out fungus with gills; its identity was not apparent so Gen collected it (in spite of the off-putting, off-collecting odour), to put under the microscope. Next find was a minute Mayfly orchid in the seed capsule stage. Kevin identified it as *Acianthus exsertus*. Hmmm, not sure how he worked that out, I could hardly see the thing let alone its special bits but its small size provided a challenge for the photographers.

Further along: 'A Little Wattle bird that looks quite big' says Jane, 'maybe a Yellow,' suggests John. The solution was 'a young Yellow Wattle bird'.

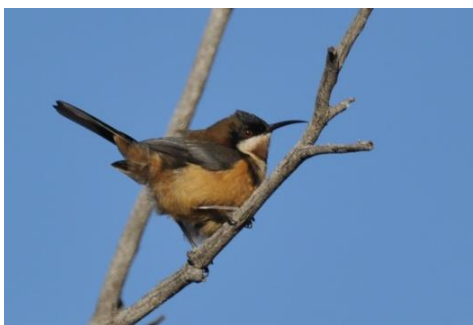
Amanda was wrestling with a bull-oak, 'What's this?' she cries, 'uh?' says Gen, 'it is a Casuarina (obviously

Amanda). 'No this' and 'this' turned out to be the iciest winciest spider with the amazing name of *Opisthonctus* sp. More fun for the paparazzi.

We dawdled along at that lovely relaxed Field Nats pace turning over logs and pieces of bark and being rewarded with strange fungi and miniscule snails. The *Epacris impressa* was wearing its dark red colours but nothing else was in flower. Jane called out to say she had found a fungus; 'what is it?' asks Gen, 'well, I would call it a pretty one but you may have another name for it,' was the reply. Indeed it was a pretty one, and I did have another name for it, the brilliant red polypore *Pycnoporus coccineus*.

More excitement atop Boronia Hill near the reservoir: 'It's a white goshawk! No, it's a white cocky, no there's two, a goshawk chasing a cocky maybe?' The final decision was two white goshawks.

And so, we made our way back to the cars, musing on the fact that TFNC members have been citizen scientists since the advent of the club in 1904, making observations and recording them. It's rather ironic that now there are conferences dedicated to such people and funding provided for their projects.



Eastern spinebill
Photo: Mick Brown

Birds

Eastern spinebill
Fairy wren
Scarlet robin
White goshawks
Yellow wattlebird

Fungi

Cortinarius clelandii
Deconica sp.
Leucopaxillus amarus
Mycena sp.
Pycnoporus coccineus
Resupinatus subapplicatus
Stereum illudens
Stereum ochraceoflavum

Snails

Caryodes dufresnii (one dead found by Amanda),
Paralaoma morti (14 under one bit of bark, none seen anywhere else!)

and the following exotics: *Oxychilus allarius*,
Microxeromagna armillata, *Arion intermedius*, very small juvenile *Limax maximus*

Genevieve Gates

'They found a Cave' – Coningham cliff-top track

Sunday 6 September

On a fine and cloudy day, 15 field nats headed along Coningham cliff-top track, destination: the sandstone cave at Snug Point. Jane dubbed the trip 'They Found a Cave', in view of the recently re-screened film of Tasmanian author Nan Chauncy's book.

The walk began on Conningham Beach, which was littered with dead surf crabs (*Ovolipes australiensis*). Don also found the carapace of a large spider crab (*Leptomithrax gaimardii*) encrusted with *Galeolaria* tubes, and a little further along the beach, a spindly spider crab leg, about the right size for the carapace.



Photo: Genevieve Gates

Amanda spotted a skink popping its head out of a hole under a log soon after we left the beach. Heading up the track on the coastal fringe of the 490 hectare Conningham Nature Recreation Area, we walked on a sandy track through vegetation dominated by *Allocasuarina verticillata* interspersed with a variety of Eucalypts – *globulus*, *amygdalina*, *ovata*, *obliqua* and *viminalis*.

Alas, we spotted no 40-spotted Pardalotes in spite of keeping an eye out as this is a known habitat for a small population.

A stiff (and rather cool) north-easterly blowing down the channel probably contributed to the shortness of the bird list: Yellow Wattlebirds (in the eucalypts near the car-park); Yellow-throated Honeyeater (many heard along the way); Brown Thornbill, Striated Pardalote, Eastern Spinebill, Crescent Honeyeater and Superb Blue Wren, and of course Silver and Kelp gulls out over the waves. Those lagging behind foraging for fungi and invertebrates received a bonus, the sight of two White-bellied Sea-eagles flying overhead and making distinctive

honking sounds. According to ww.birdsinbackyards.net, this distinctive loud 'goose-like' honking call is heard particularly during the breeding season. Another raptor flew in their wake (a Wedgie?).

The sandstone cave at the end of the cliff-top track is quite spectacular, with a large hole in the ceiling. Nan Chauncy's protagonists in *They Found a Cave*, Cherry, Nigel, Brick and Nippy, would have loved it. A bit far off the beaten track for the film-makers though. (The cave shots for the 1962 film were taken at a sandstone cliff at Longley). We lunched above the Snug Point cave before returning by the same route.

Some interesting invertebrates and other small things were photographed during the outing (mostly by Amanda), including jumping spiders; a case moth; wasp; a colourful caterpillar; a dark grey grub looking as though it was munching – (but what, on an apparently bare rock?); a metallic grub; empty goat moth pupal cases; a *Nicodamus* spider *Nicodamus peregrinus*; and a white and fluffy slime mould with orange Velvet mites on board.



Heterotextus

Photo: Genevieve Gates

Most awkward to photograph was a tiny case-moth dangling from the gills of a small fungus, and thrashing about in the breeze! Returning down the steps to Legacy Beach, Amanda found an attractive grey and cream jumping spider with most lustrous green eyes. Also a tricky one to photograph. With any luck, on closer inspection some of these pictures will allow identification of some of those critters.

Annabel spied the bud of a *Caladenia caudata*, which sent Geoff into paroxysms of excitement. Soon there were two Geoffs grovelling in awkward positions attempting photographs.

Common Froglets were croaking loudly in the small dam behind Legacy Beach, and a male Chestnut Teal was swimming about there too. He became shy when we reached for cameras though, and snuck in among the reeds on the opposite shore. Being springtime, we hope he has a mate and maybe a nest nearby.

Genevieve and the fungal fanciers constructed a long fungi list. The biggest specimen would have to be the huge white brackets in a burnt out rotten log - though if

size matters with field nats, the more diminutive the better. Annabel was in charge of the plant list. With snail species in short supply in this terrain, Kevin had to make do with orchids, though not many of these were flowering.



Carpobrotus rossii

Photo: Genevieve Gates

Plant list (compiled by Annabel Carle)

<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>	Saggs
<i>Ficinia nodosa</i>	Knobby Club-sedge
<i>Lepidospermum</i> sp.	Sword-sedge
<i>Distichlis distichophylla</i>	Salt grass
<i>Carpobrotus rossii</i>	Karkalla, Pigface
<i>Allocasuarina littoralis</i>	Black Sheoak
<i>Allocasuarina verticillata</i>	Drooping She-Oak
<i>Drosera auriculata</i>	Tall Sundew
<i>Astroloma humifusum</i>	Cranberry Heath
<i>Epacris impressa</i>	Common Heath
* <i>Erica lusitanica</i>	Spanish Heath
<i>Lissanthe strigose</i>	Peach Heath
<i>Leucopogon ericoides</i>	Pink Beard-heath
<i>Leucopogon virgatus</i> var <i>virgatus</i>	Common Beard-heath
<i>Acacia dealbata</i>	Silver Wattle
<i>Acacia longifolia</i> ssp. <i>Sophorae</i>	Coast Wattle
<i>Acacia suaveolens</i>	Sweet Wattle
<i>Acacia verticillata</i>	Prickly Moses
<i>Bossiaea cinerea</i>	Showy Bossiaea
<i>Daviesia ulicifolia</i>	Gorse Bitter-pea
<i>Indigofera australis</i>	Austral Indigo
<i>Geranium potentilloides</i>	Soft Cranes-bill
<i>Callistemon pallidus</i>	Lemon Bottlebrush
<i>Eucalyptus amygdalina</i>	Black Peppermint
<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	Southern Blue-gum
<i>Eucalyptus ovata</i> var. <i>ovata</i>	Swamp Gum
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> ssp. <i>viminalis</i>	Manna Gum
<i>Euromyrtus parviflorus</i> . (Syn. <i>E. ramossima</i> ssp. <i>prostrata</i>)	Nodding Baeckea

<i>Leptospermum laevigatum</i>	Coast Tea-tree
<i>Acianthus exsertus</i>	May-fly Orchid
<i>Caladenia caudata</i>	Tailed Spider-orchid
<i>Pterostylis pedunculata</i>	Maroonhood
<i>Oxalis perennans</i>	Grassland Wood-sorrel
<i>Bursaria spinosa</i>	Sweet Bursaria
<i>Comesperma volubile</i>	Love Creeper
<i>Banksia marginata</i>	Silver Banksia
<i>Pomaderris apetala</i>	Common Dogwood
<i>Correa alba</i>	White Correa
<i>Correa reflexa</i> var. <i>reflexa</i>	Common Correa
<i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i>	Cherry Ballart
<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i> ssp. <i>Spatulata</i>	Sticky Hop-bush
<i>Leptomeria drupacea</i>	Pale Currant-bush
<i>Viola hederacea</i>	Ivy-leafed Violet

Fungus

Heterotextus peziziformis

Janet Fenton

Peter Murrell Reserve, Kingston

October 3rd

On a blustery and hot Saturday morning, 17 members gathered at 9.30am at the Burwood Drive carpark on the edge of the Peter Murrell Reserve at Kingston. The morning walk had been timed so that those enthusiastic 'hawks and/or eagles' followers could get back to their TVs in time for the afternoon's big event. Another consideration in changing the venue from the Thumbs was to have the excursion in a less treed location to take the forecast winds, heat and going fires into account.



Masked lapwing chick

Photo: Elaine McDonald

The group proceeded along the walking track down the gentle slope through dry sclerophyll, noting several heathy plants in full flower, including pimelea, bossiaea and tetraheca. A few dainty flowering *Caladenia* orchids were spotted beside the track, and also some emerging single leaves of an unidentified orchid species. *Drosera* were also in full flower along the sandy track verges.



Shield Beetle

Photo Geoff Carle

Because of the windy conditions, no mammals and few birds were seen, but grasshoppers, butterflies and weevils were examined.

Elaine spotted a tiger snake at one point on the track, and Abby saw a bearded dragon, but the rest of us were too slow to see these quickly moving reptiles, energized by the high ambient temperature.

We completed the circuit and returned to the cars around midday, as the air temperature was rising to 30 degrees and the wind was not abating.



Lacewing larvae, with back decorated with detritus

Photo: Amanda Thomson

Plant list (compiled by Annabel Carle)

<i>Gleichenia dicarpa</i>	Pouched Coral fern
<i>Pteridium esculentum</i>	Austral bracken
<i>Lepidosperma</i> sp	Sword sedge(s)
<i>Gymnoschoenus sphaerocephalus</i>	Button grass
<i>Juncus pallidus</i>	Pale Rush
<i>Acianthus caudatus</i>	Mayfly orchid
<i>Caladenia fuscata carnea</i> complex	Dusky_Pink fingers
<i>Caleana major</i>	Flying duck orchid
<i>Glossodia major</i>	Wax-lip orchid
<i>Chordiflex monocephalus</i>	Smooth button-rush
<i>Hypolaena fastigiata</i>	Tassel rope-rush
<i>Leptocarpus tenax</i>	Slender twine-rush
<i>Cassinia aculeata</i> ssp. <i>Aculeata</i>	Common dolly-bush
<i>Allocasuarina littoralis</i>	Black she-oak
<i>Drosera peltata</i>	Pale sundew
<i>Tetradthea labillardierei</i>	Glandular pink-bells
<i>Epacris impressa</i>	Common heath
<i>Leucopogon ericioides</i>	Pink beard-heath

<i>Leucopogon virgatus var virgatus</i>	Twiggy beard-heath
<i>Styphelia adscendens</i>	Golden heath
<i>Amperea xiphioclada var. xiphioclada</i>	Broom-spurge
<i>Acacia genistifolia</i>	Spreading wattle
<i>Acacia myrtifolia</i>	Redstem wattle
<i>Aotus ericoides</i>	Golden pea or Common Aotus
<i>Bossiaea cinerea</i>	Showy bossiaea
<i>Kennedia prostrata</i>	Running postman
<i>Cassytha glabella</i>	Slender dodder-laurel
<i>Eucalyptus amygdalina</i>	Black peppermint
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis ssp. viminalis</i>	White gum
<i>Euromyrtus ramosissima</i>	Rosy heath-myrtle
<i>Leptospermum scoparium</i>	Common teatree
<i>Melaleuca squarrosa</i>	Scented paperbark
<i>Rhytidosporum procumbens</i>	Starry appleberry
<i>Banksia marginata</i>	Silver banksia
<i>Pimelea linifolia</i>	Slender rice-flower
<i>Exocarpos cupressiformis</i>	Common native cherry



Caladenia

Photo: Elaine McDonald

Birds

Butcherbird (heard)
 Blue Wren (heard)
 Dusky Woodswallow
 Welcome Swallow
 Masked Lapwing
 Brown Thornbill
 Swamp Harrier
 Forest Raven
 Fan-tailed Cuckoo
 Common Bronzewing
 Kelp Gull
 Blackbird
 Golden Whistler (heard)
 Pardalote (Striated or Spotted) (heard)

Invertebrates

Nursery-web spider
 Grasshoppers
 Satin green forester moth *Pollanisus sp.*



Satin green forester moth Pollanisus sp.

Photo: Amanda Thomson

Tarkine Bio blitz

TFN has received a letter from the Bob Brown Foundation asking members to be involved in the Tarkine Bioblitz. We provide the information here for members who may wish to participate, although TFN is not officially involved with the BioBlitz. If members considering attending are concerned about how any data they collect might be used, we recommend they enquire about this with the organisers.

Further information can be obtained by emailing:

jenny@bobbrown.org.au

Exhibition of Botanical Art

Character of the Blossom is an exhibition of the botanical works of Margaret Anderson Hope (1848-1934) which recently opened in the Allport Museum situated on the ground floor of the State Library building in Murray St.

Margaret Anderson Hope is now recognised as one of Tasmania's most important botanical artists. For a long time her work was overlooked. This exhibition shows all thirty six original watercolours and also includes a series of unfinished sketches by Hope from a private collection. A rare decorative screen painted by Hope only just discovered at an auction will also be on display.

Thanks to Janet Fenton who alerted us to this exhibition. Janet notes that Hope depicted a white form of *Telopea truncata*. Perhaps they were more widespread once?

The exhibition is showing until 16 January 2016.

<http://linconline.linc.tas.gov.au/features/Pages/Blossom.aspx>

House Sparrow Study

BirdLife Tasmania has written to TFN seeking input into a PhD project at Macquarie University looking at House Sparrows in Tasmania.

The entire Tasmanian house sparrow population has descended from just 15 individuals that were intentionally shipped from Melbourne to Hobart around 150 years ago. The invasive house sparrow continues to expand its population throughout Tasmania (and the

rest of Australia), causing ecological damage as it out-competes native bird species.

A team of biologists from Macquarie University aims to understand how this versatile species has so successfully and rapidly adapted to changing environments in Australia. This research will provide insights into how native Australian birds may cope with environmental changes (e.g. climate change) and help us understand why some species are such successful invaders.

Tasmania is of special interest to this research: house sparrows here are particularly common, and although disruptive, the speed and success of their invasion is impressive - especially having derived from only 15 initial colonists! The research team needs to set up nest box sites, and they are looking for advice regarding where house sparrows have been spotted, how many are at a particular site, locations where they are known to nest, and landowners who would be willing to host nest boxes on their property.

TFN members who can help are asked to contact:

Ellie Sheldon, Macquarie University

elizabeth-louise.sheldon@students.mq.edu.au

Phone: 0451 532 403

Citizen Science study for Churchill Fellowship

Congratulations to Clare Hawkins who has been awarded the Gallagher Bequest Churchill Fellowship. Clare has long been interested in monitoring and managing Tasmania's threatened fauna - from quolls and eagles to skinks and burrowing crayfish. Her Churchill Fellowship project is to *'design enduring methods that engage nature lovers to monitor wildlife population sizes and needs'*.

Here is what Clare says about her project.

Have you come across the Threatened Species Link website yet? As it shows, many of the problems of Tasmania's 700 threatened species arise from the cumulative actions of the many people living around them.

'Citizen science' to monitor threatened species could make quite a difference here. This is a new phrase for a very old approach - where anyone interested contributes whatever skills they have, or are willing to learn, towards research. It has a big new buzz today, relating to technology - we have smart phones and social media, remote cameras and recorders, and so can share research designs, observations and overall results really easily.

We need monitoring information to ensure that potential conservation solutions are working - and the citizen science approach can mean that people become sufficiently informed to figure solutions out for themselves.

There are challenges! To detect changes in population numbers or distributions, surveys need to be repeated year after year - perhaps including visits to remote or uninteresting sites, without always seeing the species in question. Many can also be difficult to identify.

Various organisations around the world have nonetheless become spectacularly good at making citizen science effective, designing enjoyable work supported by clever data analysis tools. I've now been awarded a Churchill Fellowship to go and visit some of these organisations, in the USA, Hungary and UK. I'll be focussing on developing designs to monitor threatened burrowing crayfish (for a project in Devonport starting next year, in collaboration with the council and the Bookend Trust), and also terrestrial mammals and eagles. I believe that if I have good designs for three such diverse groups, I'll be well on my way to developing designs for plenty more species over the long term.

I'd love to hear from my fellow Field Nats about any work of this nature around Tasmania, past or present - ie in which groups of amateur naturalists have helped investigate the needs of our threatened species. What did it involve, what was good or bad about it, why did it last, or not?

I've just started a blog - naturetrackers.org - to discuss what I learn as I travel around. I invite you to participate in that, and/or email me on clare.hawkins@utas.edu.au

I can't guarantee to reply to every email, especially while travelling, but I'll try to incorporate people's information in future blog posts, and also any future talks; and I thank you all very warmly in advance!

Editor's note

This edition of the Bulletin is short on photographs. I am not usually able to attend excursions, and rely on the members' postings on the TFN Flickr site.

Alas! When setting out the bulletin this month I found, to my consternation that members seem to have abandoned Flickr in preference for Facebook!

So... if we are to have illustrations for each of our excursions in our Bulletin, I am making a plea for members to send selected photographs WITH SPECIES INFORMATION to the bulletin editor's email address.



TFN members doing what they do best - at Peter Murrell Reserve

Photo: Amanda Thomson