



Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club Inc.

BULLETIN

Editor: Deirdre Brown email: tfn.bulletin.editor@gmail.com

Quarterly Bulletin

No 364

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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.

Visit our website <http://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/>; email info@tasfieldnats.org.au; or write to GPO Box 68, Hobart, 7001.

We welcome articles and interesting photos for the Bulletin. Email the editor. Next deadline 15 January 2017.

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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. Please confirm the details on the club website as late changes are sometimes made.

Thurs. Oct 6th	Guest Speaker: Sue Robinson: Big Green Island Rat Eradication Program.
Sun. Oct 9th	Excursion: TBA
Thurs. Nov. 2nd	Guest Speaker: Alastair Richardson: The Forgotten Strandline, or the Desert on our Doorstep.
Sat. Nov. 4th	Excursion: TBA
Thurs. Dec. 1st	Members' night when members are invited to contribute their observations.
Sun. Dec 4th	Excursion: TBA
Thurs. Feb. 2nd	First meeting for 2017
Sat. Feb. 5th	First Excursion for 2017

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

Subscriptions

Thank you to all members who have paid subs. 2017 subscriptions will be due in January.

Outstanding 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

Find us at
<http://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/>

Lichen Hill

Excursion 9 July 2016

Attendees: Gintaras Kantvilas (excursion leader), Kevin and Abbey, Don, Amanda, Anna, Geoff and Janet, Jane, Sabine and John.

The July excursion fittingly took place at Lichen Hill, following the excellent Thursday evening presentation on 'The Secret Life of Lichens' by Dr Gintaras Kantvilas of the Tasmanian Herbarium.

Ten enthusiastic Field Nats members and Gintaras met at the turnoff to the Lichen Hill Road not far from Eaglehawk Neck and then carefully negotiated the quite pot-holed and rutted gravel road in.



The excursion group
Photo: Geoff Fenton

Having parked near the trail entrance, it did not take us long to stumble upon some lichens growing on the embankment (two *Cladonia* species, *Cladia aggregata* and *Baeomyces heteromorphus*). On the track itself, through wet sclerophyll forest, we walked only a couple of metres before gathering round a dogwood trunk covered with mosses and several foliose and crustose lichen species. It is not unusual to find a dozen or so lichen species on an individual tree, some preferring the lower trunk, others tending to grow on higher branches.

And we slowly ambled on as Gintaras pointed out lichen species growing on rocks, soil, amongst mosses and liverworts, on rotting logs, on trunks and on branches. Some species even grow on top of each other or in succession. He said in this locality we could expect to find 100-150 species, 48 of which are listed below. As there had been some rain lately, the lichens were quite 'plump', glistening and brightly coloured, and the bryophytes were also looking very lush.

Some lichens change colour quite dramatically between wet and dry. For example, *Pseudocyphellaria rubella*, which is also very prominent in the open areas on the nearby Tatnells Hill, changes from bright green to a dull

grey colour when dry. Some lichen species had undergone name changes due to taxonomic rearrangement, which can be a bit frustrating and confusing for beginners.

This was an excellent opportunity to learn more about lichens first-hand from Tasmania's foremost lichenologist. Hopefully, this excursion has helped spark up greater awareness of and enthusiasm for lichens as an important element of biodiversity and landscapes.



Pseudocyphellaria billardierei
Photo: Geoff Fenton

Gintaras joked that anyone who didn't at least remember the distinctive *Pseudocyphellaria billardierei* (photo above) from this excursion would be walking home. As its name suggests, this was one of the many lichen species first collected by Jacques Labillardière. (Of course nobody ended up walking home.)

Naturally, this outing wasn't just about lichens. A white, 'spikey' springtail that looked like an *Acanthanura* species was spotted early on a trunk but evaded photographers by crawling into a bark crevice.

Some slime moulds were found growing on moss. Interestingly, Geoff's photo later revealed a glow-worm with mucus and threads along with a white slime mould on a log. It is amazing what a camera lens can show up!

There were some quite large specimens of jelly fungus on a rotting log (*Tremella fuciformis*?). Several coral fungi and some puffballs (*Lycoperdon perlatum*?) were also seen.

Geoff photographed a handsome group of delicate pale fungi (identified by Genevieve Gates as *Mycena subgalericulata*). I'm sure if Genevieve had been with us she would have identified many more species.



Mycena subgalericulata
Photo: Geoff Fenton

Don has been testing an interesting hypothesis about wombat distribution in relation to whether different habitat types offer burrowing opportunities. He did not notice any wombat scats on Lichen Hill, commenting, 'This is in conformity with my working hypothesis that many dolerite hilltops have only shallow soils that do not offer shelter to this species as an obligate burrower.'



View from Cashes Lookout
Photo: Geoff Fenton

We had lunch amongst a grove of tree ferns and then decided to head back. We wouldn't have walked much further than half a kilometre up the track. After we returned to the cars at about 3 p.m. the group decided to make a little side trip to Cashes Lookout, also known as 'Hang Glider's Lookout' because there is a pad for hang gliders to take off.

The vegetation here was dry sclerophyll. At the lookout we enjoyed a very clear view of Eaglehawk Neck and Pirates Bay. Apparently, whales and seals can sometimes be seen from here, but unfortunately not this time.

A man and his son arrived at the scene, and the former turned out to have been a student of Gintaras at UTAS. Tasmania is indeed a small place.



Pannaria sp.
Photo: Geoff Fenton

On our way back to the cars, I found another interesting fruticose lichen growing on a burnt log, *Thysanothecium scutellatum*, which I learnt is related to *Cladonia* ('pixie cup' lichens).

Sabine Borgis



Amanda and Gintaras
Photo Sabine Borgis

Lichen species list (Gintaras Kantvilas/Sabine Borgis)

- Baeomyces heteromorphus*
- Bapalmuia buchananii*
- Cladia aggregata*
- Cladonia capitellata*
- C. chlorophaea*,
- C. corniculata*
- C. neozelandica* (4 varieties)

C. ochrochlora
C. ramulosa
C. rigida,
C. scabriuscula
C. tenerrima
C. verticillata
Hypogymnia mundata
Lecanora farinacea
Leifidium tenerum
Lepraria finkii (determined by chemistry)
Megaloblastenia marginiflexa
Megalospora pulverata
Menegazzia neozelandica (not common in Tasmania but locally common on Tasman Peninsula)
M. confuse
M. platytrema
Mycoblastus coniothorus
Pannaria minutiphylla, *Pannaria* sp.
Pannoparmelia wilsonii
Parapropidia leptocarpa
Parmelia tenuirima
Parmotrema perlatum
Peltigera dolichorhiza
Pertusaria novaezelandiae, *P. truncata*
Phlyctis subuncinata
Placopsis gelida
Pseudocyphellaria billardierei,
P. coronate
P. dissimilis
P. glabra
P. multifidi
P. rubella
Psoroma asperellum
P. contextum
Ramalina inflata
Sarrameana albidoplumbea
Stereocaulon ramulosum
Thelotrema lepadinum
Usnea oncodes
U. xanthopoga
Seen near Cashes Lookout:
Thysanothecium scutellatum
Xanthoparmelia mougeotina,
Ramboldia blastidiata
R. petraeoides



Parmelia tenuirama

Photo: Sabine Borgis

Snails species list (Kevin Bonham)

Caryodes dufresnii
Helicarion cuvieri
Tasmaphena sinclairi (a carnivorous species)
Thryasona diemenensis
Thryasona marchianae
Trocholaoma spiceri
Paralaoma sp. "Knocklofty"
P. halli
P. discors
Discocharopa mimosa
Pernagera sp. "Waterfall"
Allocharopa sp. "MacGregor".

The last two species are endemic to Tasman and Forestier Peninsulas. *Trocholaoma spiceri* is uncommon.

Calverts Lagoon

Excursion Sunday 7th August

Nine of us enjoyed a walk around Calverts Lagoon, followed by a trip to Hope Beach and Goats Bluff. Having Els Wakefield with us was a boon for finding and identifying the many birds in and around the lagoon.

My carload was lucky to have a disorientated ? Swamp Harrier with skinned rabbit in tow, fly directly in front of us as we turned off to the lagoon. Other notable observations were Scarlet and Flame Robins, a pair of Welcome Swallows collecting mud and grass for their nest. Shoveler Ducks on the lagoon and flying overhead.

Robyn Gates identified an Emperor Gum Moth feeding on plantain, possibly the lure for the Flame Robin.

Despite the sunny conditions it was cool. All day we had a 'sun halo' – formed by sunlight passing through ice crystals in cirrus clouds in the Earth's atmosphere.



Don with halo

Photo: Amanda Thomson

A couple of rare finds included a Masked Lapwing nest with 5 eggs, and another with 4.

Els alerted us to the rare plant *Cuscuta tasmanica* or 'Golden Dodder' the only known parasitic native herb to be found in saltmarshes. Leafless, it grows on host herbs (often *Wilsonia*) whose nutrients it absorbs through special attachments 'haustoria'. (Ref: *A Guide to the Plants of Saltmarsh Wetlands*, by Vishnu Prahalad.) It formed bands of bright yellow twisted tendrils on parts of the shore.



Cuscuta tasmanica, or 'Golden Dodder'

Photo: Amanda Thomson

From Goats Bluff we walked along Hope Beach where we were privy to a dispute on nearby Betsey Island between a pair of Sea eagles and a pair of Wedge-tailed eagles! Kevin was very pleased to make the rare find of a Plump Cowrie – *Notocyprae subcarnea*!

List of observations

- Hairy, red mite
- Moth, – unidentified *Geometrid Larentidae*
- Salt Lagoon Snail – *Coxiella striata*
- Shield Stink bug - *Anaxilus vesiculosus*
- Welcome Swallows – pair

Amanda Thomson



Hairy red mite with salt lagoon snails, *Coxiella* sp.

Photo: Amanda Thomson

Bird List (Els Wakefield)

South East side Calverts Lagoon 10am to 11:50

- Superb Fairy-Wren
- Kelp Gulls 10
- Yellow-throated Honeyeater
- Black Swan 19
- White-faced Heron 3
- Masked Lapwing 2
- Common Starling circa 50
- Laughing Kookaburra 2
- Australasian Shoveler 5
- Noisy Minor
- Grey Butcherbird 1
- Kelp Gull skeleton
- Hooded Plover 2
- Tasmanian Native Hen 3
- Also, a Brown Froglet

Dam

- Tasmanian Native Hen 3
- Superb Fairy-Wrens
- Australian Magpie 4
- Pied Oystercatcher 1
- Masked Lapwing 1
- Wood Duck 4
- Forest Raven 1
- Chestnut Teal 13
- Australasian Shoveler 3
- Grey Teal 4
- Pacific Black Duck 2
- Flame Robin 1 m
- Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo 3
- Galah 3
- Masked Lapwing 1
- Swamp Harrier 1

W Side Calverts Lagoon 11:50

Eastern Rosella 4
Grey Butcherbird 1
Scarlet Robin M 1
White-fronted Chat 11
European Greenfinch 12
Hooded Plover 4
Australasian Pipit 2
Yellow-rumped Thornbill 4
Flame Robin 2

Goats Bluff 13:00

Black-faced Cormorant 8
Greater Crested Tern 18
Black Jack Rock
Sooty Oystercatcher 1
Silver Gull circa 15

Betsy Island 13:20

Wedge-tailed Eagle 2
White-bellied Sea Eagle 2
Forest Raven 3
Pacific Gull 2 (on water)

Beach (Roaring Beach?) 13:50

Hooded Plover 2

Goats Bluff 14:10

Scarlet Robin 1 male
Superb Fairy-Wrens
Yellow-throated Honeyeater

South Arm Neck 14:20 (EIs only)

European Greenfinch c30

Lime Bay State Reserve

3 September 2016

On a misty overcast day with cloud settling on the surrounding hills, seven of us (Gen, David, Amanda, Kaye, Don, Abbey and Jane), arrived at the camping ground by midmorning. At the entrance, one car load of people was surprised to spot a southern brown bandicoot roaming through the tussocks. Then all were all delightfully entertained by a young puggle snuffling its way unconcernedly through the campsite.

We wandered down to the white sandy beach to have a quick look at the pied and sooty oystercatchers strutting along the foreshore, before taking the inland track towards Lagoon Beach.

This flat sandy track passed through open woodland with a wide range of understorey and ground cover species, and coastal heath. Epacris shrubs bloomed pink and white, the air was filled with spring birdsong and the

sun even came out. We strolled along to a fork in the path where we sat down to wait for everyone to catch up, have lunch and sample Gen's delicious banana bread.

Instead of tramping on ahead and over the dunes to the beach, we turned left towards the lagoons. Unusually, they were all brimming blue with water and dotted with black swans and shelduck. We gradually skirted around the marshy edges and made our way back to the campsite by a new linking track through the woodland, at the head of the lagoons. All in all, a very pleasant, easy and varied circular walk.

Jane Catchpole

Species list (seen/heard)

Birds

Yellow wattle bird
Masked lapwing
Oystercatcher, pied and sooty
Grey shrike thrush
Yellow throated honey eater
Striated and spotted pardalote
Green rosella
Grey fantail
Flame robin
Black swan
Australian shelduck
Australasian pipit
Fantailed cuckoo
White faced heron
Great egret

Flowering Plants

Leucopogon ericoides
Acacia suaveolens
Acacia dealbata
Epacris impressa
Eucalyptus amgydalina
Leptospermum lanigerum
Mosquito/gnat orchid in bud
Native cherry

Frogs

Tasmanian froglet

Fungi

Bovista sp.
Cortinaruis sp.
Fomitiporia robusta
Inocybe sp

Laccaria sp

Lichenomphalia chromacea

Perenniporia ochroleuca

Mammals

Wombat

Echidna

Southern Brown Bandicoot

A Lyrebird sighting

While out on a fungi walk at Myrtle Forest (Collinsvale) in August, a small group of TFN members encountered a lyrebird which came within metres of them.

Geoff Carle got this photograph of the lyrebird.



Lyrebird at Myrtle Forest

Photo: Geoff Carle

New website

Tas Field Nats now has a new website, and you can find it at the same URL:

tasfieldnats.org.au

The website still provides access to our Bulletins (from January 2000) and almost every copy of the Tasmanian Naturalist (from 1907), as well as our bookshop, an archive of excursion photos and a page of useful links related to Field Naturalists' interests.

Please note that there have been some changes to club email addresses. These are the correct addresses now:

President: president@tasfieldnats.org.au

Secretary: secretary@tasfieldnats.org.au

Treasurer: treasurer@tasfieldnats.org.au

Naturalist Editor: mickjbrown1@outlook.com

Bulletin Editor: tfn.bulletin.editor@gmail.com

Librarian: librarian@tasfieldnats.org.au

Library Corner

Our TFNC Library book catalogue is now on-line and can be found on our new website. See <http://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/library/>

New Acquisitions

A Field Guide to Tasmanian Mammals – A Field Guide (published 1993) by D. Watts.

King of the Wilderness. The Life of Deny King (published 2001) by C. Mattingley. (Replacement).

Wattles of Tasmania (published 2009) by D. Simmons.

The following purchases have completed the set of Identikit pocket sized guides held by our library:

Common Orchids of Tasmania – Plant Identikit (published 2010) by P. Collier.

Rainforest Plants of Tasmania – Plant Identikit (published 2007) by P. Collier & C. Howells.

Woodland Wildflowers of Tasmania - Plant Identikit (published 2006) by P. Collier & C. Howells.

What books should we buy?

We welcome recommendations of books that should be purchased for the TFNC Library.

Missing books

We note that some books donated to our Library by David Ratkowsky in 1987 are missing. Please check your book shelves and return if found:

Southern Australian Liverworts by George AM Scott.

The Mosses of Southern Australia by Scott, Stone and Rosser.

The Liverworts of New Zealand by Allison & Child.

The Mosses of New Zealand by Allison & Child.

Borrowing books

Whenever possible the Library cupboard will be open for loans/returns by 7.15pm before each monthly meeting.

New books acquired for the Library since the last meeting will also be displayed

An email to librarian@tasfieldnats.org.au will ensure any books you wish to borrow are ready and waiting for you.

Book sales

See our website at:

<http://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/bookshop/>

There are just TWO copies left of the *Jewel Beetles of Tasmania* by David Cowrie. \$12.00 + postage.

TFNC Archives

Now that the Tasmanian Naturalist is available on line (<http://www.tasfieldnats.org.au/naturalist/>) we have been rationalising the paper copies that we hold.

However we find we would like to hold one more hard copy of the following four editions.

Aug 1976 #46, Jan 1993 #112, Apr 1993 #113, July 1993 #114, Oct 1993 #115

Please email the librarian if you can donate any of the above Tasmanian Naturalists.

librarian@tasfieldnats.org.au

Letters to the Editor

Citizen Science

Dear Tas Field Nats,

My first citizen science paper just came out and I would like to thank everybody who helped to support this, particularly all the wonderful volunteers spreading brochures, all the participants and the TFNC committee in particular for being so supportive from the start of this project.

Here is the link to the paper and some media coverage:

<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0161447>

<http://phys.org/news/2016-09-historical-coexistence-dingoes-bandicoot-domestic.html>

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/09/160907143121.htm>

There will be updated information on the project's Facebook page (Backyard Wildlife Hobart) and I will be back in Hobart briefly around Christmas when I have scheduled a public lecture for the 19 Dec in the conference room under the Town Hall. Bookings will be required closer to the date.

With kind regards from Germany,

Anke Frank

(These links are also available on the TFN website on a new page entitled Research News. Ed.)

Water birds on the Huon

I would be grateful if you could help me in my search for information on changes in the numbers of water birds on the Huon River and its estuary.

I have often speculated on the reasons for the relatively small numbers of waterfowl in the Huon's wetlands and marshes.

I've read the Huon Collaboration Report Card 2015 and skimmed the 2012 "State of the D'Entrecasteaux Channel and the lower Huon Estuary" by Karen Parsons, plus a 1998 report. Taken together they are not that encouraging.

The current Report Card notes a marked decline in the nitrogen load and other pollutants from fish farms, but on the negative side toxic algal blooms, loss of sea grass,

shrinking wetlands and inedible shellfish are not so good.

The 1998 Huon Estuary Study mentions, "The pesticides results do indicate that there is not gross contamination from these contaminants (modern pesticides) in the Huon Estuary. One disturbing aspect, nevertheless, is the high concentrations of DDT and DDD in the sediment sample from Hospital Bay". The authors recommend further work on this as their sampling was merely part of a "scouting study."

The Tasmanian Planning Commission's "State of the Environment Report 2009: Waterbird Population Trends" mainly concerns itself with ducks, a shooters perspective, and doesn't cover the Huon.

Do TFN members know of any further studies carried out on the Huon River?

French explorers, British explorers and early settlers of the area remarked on the huge numbers of swans and other waterfowl. At 88 Nathalie Norris, orchardist of Fortescue Bay, remembers plentiful waterfowl in the 1930's.

Wetlands in many other places still teem with bird life.

Even the Port Cygnet Conservation Area isn't really teeming with the numbers one would expect to see. There's something amiss.

Given the paucity of official records it's time to look elsewhere. A wider net needs to be cast to search local memories and records. There should also be photographs giving evidence of the river's bird life from the 1850's on.

If you are able to shed any light on this topic please contact me.

Phil Gorman

(03) 6295 1151, Address: PO Box 218, Cygnet 7112.

Email: phil.gorman@iinet.net.au

Corinna Frogs request

The following request was received by email. Please contact Corinna Wilderness Experience by the provided email address if you can assist.

Hi,

Im trying to locate a list of frogs found within 10km of Corinna, Tasmania. Are you able to help me with this or could you please point me in the right direction?

Kind regards

Kelly, Manager, Corinna Wilderness Experience

Your letters and observations are always welcome for publication in this Bulletin. Please email them to the editor at tfn.bulletin.editor@gmail.com