

**BULLETIN OF THE**  
**TASMANIAN FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INC.**  
<http://www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/tasfield/tasfield.htm>

Jan 1999\*  
Editor Andrew Walsh

Number 293

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

Contact Genevieve Gates (03 6227 8638) for further information, or write to GPO Box 68A Hobart 7001. Bulletin or website articles to Andrew Walsh (above address or 146 Misty Hill Rd. Mountain River 7109)

### PROGRAM

General meetings start at 7:45pm on the first Thursday of the month in the Life Sciences Building at the University of Tasmania. Outings are usually held the following weekend, meeting at 10am outside the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery entrance, Macquarie St. *If you are planning to attend an outing but not the meeting prior, check as to the timing of the excursion as sometimes unforeseen changes occur.*

4<sup>th</sup> Feb- **Roadside rescue of native vegetation**- Natalie Papworth (Roy. Tas. Bot. Gardens)

7<sup>th</sup> Feb- (Sun) A native plant journey to Old Beach.

4<sup>th</sup> Mar- **Maram grass in coastal ecosystems**- Mike Pemberton (P.W.S.) followed by our Annual General Meeting, which will involve the nomination and voting in of the new committee for 1999. A nomination form is enclosed in this issue.

6<sup>th</sup> Mar- (Sat) Field trip to be announced at meeting on 4th March.

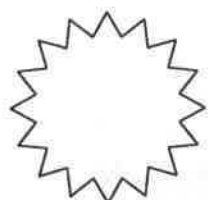
26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> Mar- **Federation Weekend Outing**. All Field Nats in Tasmania get together for a weekend at Paton Park near Ulverstone. This weekend is hosted by the Burnie Field Naturalists. For more information contact Kevin Bonham (ph. 6224 8487).

### Other Activities

The **Tasmanian Environment Centre Inc** is organising a ferry trip to Partridge Island on board the MV Cartela on Sunday February 28th, departing the Brooke St Pier at 8.15 am, returning ca. 6.00 pm (cruise time 3.5 hours each way).

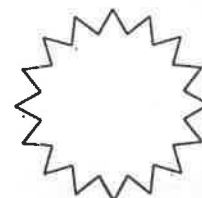
Costs are Adults \$20, Concession \$15 and Children \$12 (accompanied by adult). Food and refreshments can be purchased on board the boat, otherwise pack a picnic lunch. Bookings must be made by Fri 12th Feb. through the Tasmanian Environment Centre, 102 Bathurst St Hobart, ph 6234 5566 (Fax 6234 5543).

**Hobart City Council Summer Bushcare Activities** as well as **Free Ranger-Guided Summer Activities around Hobart**- see inside this bulletin for further details.



**Subscriptions are now due for 1999.**

See membership renewal form inside this bulletin.



## Free Ranger-Guided Summer Activities around Hobart

Over the summer, the Parks and Wildlife Service will be conducting a program of guided walks, spotlight tours, slide shows and exciting activities at various national parks around the State. Highly qualified and experienced Interpretation Rangers will be on hand to answer your questions and reveal a deeper side to the remarkable natural and cultural heritage of our parks.

All activities are free; For enquiries and bookings please call 6233 6191, Monday - Friday 9 -5; Children should be accompanied by an adult; please wear strong footwear and appropriate clothing.

### **Thursday 4th February**

**8:30 pm: "Bugs and Bandicoots"** Come for a spotlight walk and find out about some of the animals that live around Hobart. To book on this activity please call 6233 6191 from 9 am -5 pm.

### **Friday 5th February**

**2:00 pm - 5:00 pm: Wildlife of Mount Nelson**  
Come and talk to a Ranger at Mount Nelson Signal Station about some of the animals that live in Hobart's urban fringe and how to find out if they're about.

**8:30 pm: "Bugs and Bandicoots"** Come for a spotlight walk and find out about some of the animals that live around Hobart. To book on this activity please call 6233 6191 from 9 am -5 pm.

### **Saturday 6th February**

**2:00 pm - 5:00 pm: Waterworks Wildlife.** Look for the Parks and wildlife Exhibit at the Waterworks Reserve and learn about some of the wildlife living close to Hobart.

## Hobart City Council Summer

### Bushcare Activities

Bookings are required for all activities. Phone Kerry Heatley at the Hobart City Council on 6238 2884. Please wear warm clothing, strong boots and bring a suitable raincoat. Remember weather on Mt. Wellington can change very suddenly. Also bring refreshments and snack for walks.

### **Friday 5th February**

**9.15pm-10.30 pm**

#### **Bizarre Bats- Waterworks Reserve.**

See these fascinating little creatures close range with Ray Brereton from Parks and Wildlife. There will be time to look for Bandicoots too.

### **Friday 12th February**

**9.00 pm-10.00 pm**

#### **Bandicoot Search- Waterworks Reserve.**

A spotlight to look for Barred Bandicoots, Brushtail Possums and other native wildlife.

### **Friday 19th February**

**9.00 pm-10.00 pm**

#### **Bat Watch- Fern tree**

See the native bats which live around Fern Tree.

They include about five species of these tiny insect eating mammals.

### **Sunday 20th February**

**2.00 pm-4.00 pm**

#### **Bush Banquet- Fern Tree**

Turn the bush into afternoon tea with the help of Kris Schaffer from the Australian Bush Foods Society. There will be lots of tasty morsels to try.

### **Friday 26th February**

**9.00 pm-10.00 pm**

#### **Bat Catch- Fern tree**

Your last chance to have a close up view of Tasmania's micro bats before next summer. These bats will go into hibernation during the cool weather.

## Short Courses in Coastal Management

Greening Australia (Tas) is organising accredited short courses in coastal management in February (Hobart), March (Launceston), August (Hobart), and October (Launceston). Courses provide those involved in coastal management with information to use daily in their workplace. Whether in State and local government, community based organisations, committees of management, industry or professional associations, participants will find these courses of value. Courses include both classroom sessions and field trips and have an emphasis on problem solving using local examples. Costs are Introductory Course \$250, Advanced Courses \$250 each, and Additional Advanced Course \$100. A small number of subsidised positions are available for members of community/volunteer groups. For more information call Greening Australia on 6223 6377.

## To all our friends in TFNC

from Sue & Phil Collier

It has been an interesting year and busy year for us. House renovations have been mixed with trips to the bush.

We are finding the walking easier and not so spectacular. We have had several trips to the high country for overnight camping in good weather. September/October saw us with two weeks holiday at Wilson Prom. and the Grampians. Excellent orchid hunting and walking.

We have both settled into work fairly well and are enjoying the change both at work and home, We miss our friends in Tas but are looking forward to more mainland wanderings.

Christmas will be a three week trip from Canberra to Thredbo across the mountains. We hope our new garden will not suffer too much and the watering system works.

Kind regards to all.

## Book Review

By Kevin Bonham

Jones, David Contributions to Tasmanian Orchidology 1-9 Australian Orchid Research 3 Australian Orchid Foundation, Essendon, Vic. (Available: Hans Wapstra at Parks and Wildlife, Tasmanian Environment Centre)

After a decade of uncertainty, this volume presents a massive overhaul of Tasmania's orchid flora, and renders all previous Tasmanian orchid books redundant. For instance, almost half the names used by Curtis (1979) have changed. This book cannot stand alone as a Tasmanian orchid guide, but aims to describe new species, eliminate incorrect records, clarify species and checklist the Tasmanian flora, which now includes 186 species, 60 of them endemic.

Jones also includes new identification keys for the more diverse genera. While much more user-friendly than the notoriously technical Curtis keys, these have the defect of sometimes choosing on the basis of characters where you might need several specimens to be sure. If your sole *Caladenia* specimen from a locality has one flower, how do you know whether its species can sometimes produce more than one flower?

Jones has done a superb job of eliminating incorrectly recorded species from the Tasmanian taxa, and anyone identifying our orchids will be glad to have several mainland "red herrings" off our list. In general, Jones' new species, although sometimes

based on quite minor differences, are thoroughly justified and illustrated with especially crisp and detailed drawings and (in many cases) photos, several of which are outstanding. There may still be argument about some species (for instance, I'd like to see more robust study of variation in *Caladenia carnea* / *C. fuscata*.) but the vast majority of Jones' names are clearly here to stay. Jones' notes on the distribution, characters, protection status and altitude ranges of species are generous and very helpful, although the last two contain a few inevitable errors.

Those actively involved in identifying and conserving orchids, or with an interest in how orchid taxonomy develops, will find this book immediately useful. Those just looking for a new stand-alone guide to Tasmanian orchids should probably wait for "Orchids of Tasmania", expected out around December 1999, which may include a few more changes, as studies in some genera (e.g. *Microtis* and *Thelymitra*) are continuing.

## Bird Counters Wanted

Matt Wheeler, Coordinator of the Wetlands International Cambodia and Mekong Program based in Phnom Penh, is looking for an experienced counter of shorebirds who might have 30 days to spare in March of this year. Wetlands International, in collaboration with Birdlife International, are soon to commence a one-month study of shorebirds in southern Vietnam to nominate sites for the Shorebird Reserve Network; the work is being managed by Wetlands International from the Canberra office, specifically by Doug Watkins. Help is needed from someone who is already living or traveling in the region and would like the experience of being part of the project. They have not got much funding for salaries but do have enough to cover all expenses: food, accommodation, and transport. If you should know of anyone who might be interested in helping out, please ask him or her to contact Matt directly (phone/fax: (855) 23 427 137, Mobile: (855) 15 830 410, e-mail [wetlands@bigpond.com.kh](mailto:wetlands@bigpond.com.kh)).

## Seed Collecting Day at Hamilton

The Understorey Network is conducting a seed collection day on **Tuesday February 9<sup>th</sup> at 9 am**. Meet at the Hamilton Resource Centre, and bring your lunch, drink, sun hat and sunscreen, secateurs, paper bags and pencils. For further info phone/fax Alison on 6399 3593.

Email: [understoreynet@hotmail.com](mailto:understoreynet@hotmail.com). Learn the benefits of understorey planting in your garden and farm; working with nature to restore health and beauty in our environment.

# Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club Inc.

## Membership renewal form

Name and address  
(or attach address  
label)

### Membership fees

Adult	\$20
Family	\$25
Concession	\$15
Junior	\$15

Please return this form and your  
membership fee to

The Secretary  
Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club Inc.  
GPO Box 68A, Hobart, 7001

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### Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club Inc. - Nomination Form

I hereby propose \_\_\_\_\_ for the position of \_\_\_\_\_

Proposer \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to stand for the above position \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Positions on the committee: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Bulletin Editor,  
Naturalist Editor, Programme Officer, Librarian, and three committee members.

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26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> Mar- **Federation Weekend Outing.** More details in this Bulletin. Sorry about the short notice.

8<sup>th</sup> Apr- **Note this is the second Thursday of April!**

Syb Corbitt- Plants and Rocks- shaping the scenery of the World Heritage Area

11<sup>th</sup> Apr- (Sun) Walk to Lake Skinner. Meet at the museum at **9.00 am**, then meet at the Grove shop around 9:30 am for members south of Hobart.

6<sup>th</sup> May- Don Hird- A talk on his journey to the Trobriand Is.

7 May- (**FRI NIGHT**) Inspired by The Great Marsupial Stalk organised Australia wide by the Perth Zoo for that evening, we will be meeting at the Fern Tree picnic area (near the Fern Tree tavern) at **7:00 pm** where our club will be supplying at BBQ dinner before going spotlighting nearby. Please bring torches, warm clothing and good footwear.

3<sup>rd</sup> Jun- Alastair Richardson (Tas Uni.)- The strandline of sandy beaches.

5<sup>th</sup> Jun- (Sat) An exploration of Lagoon Bay, Dunalley. Meet at the museum normal time (10:00 am)

### New Committee

The new committee for 1999 was elected at the Annual General Meeting in March. Len Cusack and Jim Paterson have not continued as committee members this year, so we thank them for their valuable contribution to the team in 1998. The committee members for 1999 are;

President- Kevin Bonham

Vice President- Genevieve Gates

Secretary- Julia Scott

Treasurer- John Reid

Walk & Talks- Amanda Thomson

Bulletin Editor- Don Hird

Naturalist Editor- Rob Taylor

Librarian- Janet Fenton

General Committee- Andrew Walsh

General Committee- Tom Terry

## That survey

Thank you to the 26 people who returned their questionnaires. A report has been prepared for the committee and will be discussed at the March committee meeting. For those who are curious, some of the results are presented below (not all as that would take up all of the bulletin). The full report will be available on the front desk at the April general meeting.

### **How long have you been a member of the**

**T.F.N.C.?** The average length of membership was 16 years.

### **Which weekend days do you prefer for field trips?**

Saturday- 7

Sunday- 6

Rotating month to month- 7

Any- 2 (which can be considered equivalent to rotating)

### **What length of trip do you prefer?**

Short (up to 2 hours)- 2

Medium (2-4 hours)- 7

Long (all day)- 8

Mix- 1

No preference- 4

### **What distance from the city are you prepared to travel for day trips?**

< 1/2 hour- 0

1/2 hour- 0

1 hour- 5

1.5 hour- 5

1.5+ hour- 13

### **Suggestions to use the money.**

Publish a book (several suggested birds, as well as insect, skinks, or fossils or/of Lambert Park), use it for publicity, project grants or scholarship, sponsor a survey of beetles/moths/flora/fauna, donate to Bush Heritage Fund, buy land and/or a hut (like Skemps), buy more books for library, buy a binocular microscope, fund annual camps, database index for journal (by subject/species/author).

## **Change of name**

Just a small note that the Deloraine Field naturalists Club have changed their name to the Central North Field Naturalists Club.

## **Hobart City Council Summer Bushcare Activities- Autumn**

Bookings are required for all activities. Phone Kerry Heatley at the Hobart City Council on 6238 2884. Please wear warm clothing, strong boots and bring a suitable raincoat. Remember weather on Mt. Wellington can change very suddenly. Also bring refreshments and snack for walks.

### **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March**

7:30 pm-9 pm

Mammal Spotlight Waterworks Reserve

### **Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April**

7:30 pm-9 pm

Possum Prowl Waterworks Reserve

### **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April**

10am-12 noon

Bush Banquet

Learn about Aboriginal bush tucker which grows on the Mountain. Kris Schaffer, an expert in bush foods, will take you on a short walk to see the plants. This will be followed by a tasting session, with a large array of delicious foods to try.

### **Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> April**

7:30 pm-9 pm

Bandicoot Search Waterworks Reserve

### **Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April**

10am - 12 noon

Fungi Frolic Fern Glade Track

Discover fungi with Alan Mills from Tas. Uni.

### **Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May**

10am - 12 noon

Fungi Frolic Fern Glade Track

Same as fungi frolic for 24<sup>th</sup> of April.

### **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May**

7:30 pm-9 pm

Animals of the Night Waterworks Reserve

### **Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May**

7:30 pm-9 pm

Bettong Bound Waterworks Reserve

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- 
- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Thurs. 1 July.  | <u>7.45p.m.</u> : Tim Rudman, a botanist with Parks and Wildlife will talk on the perennial (and annual !) issue of <i>Weeds in the Tasmanian Environment</i> .   |
| <hr/>           |   |
| Sunday 4 July.  | <u>10 a.m.</u> : An excursion in the Hobart area will follow up on Tim's talk.  |
| <hr/>           |   |
| Thurs. 5 August | <u>7.45p.m.</u> : David Pemberton will speak on <i>The Biology of Seals in Waters Around Tasmania</i> . David is Curator of Vertebrates at the Tasmanian Museum.  |
| <hr/>           |   |
| Sunday 8 August | <u>9 a.m.</u> : A boat visit to one of the hauling grounds for seals in SE Tasmania. Our preferred destination is <i>The Friars</i> off Bruny Island, another possibility is Hippolyte Rock off Eaglehawk Neck. Numbers will be limited by the size of the chartered boat and prior booking is <i>essential</i> . Cost is not known at printing of Bulletin.  |
| <hr/>           |   |
| Thurs. 2 Sept.  | <u>7.45p.m.</u> : Adrian Pyrke, a Fire Management Officer with Parks and Wildlife, will speak on <i>Germination Ecology in Relation to Animal Scratchings and Diggings</i> . Note that the excursion is later this month, coinciding with the Federation Meeting.   |
| <hr/>           |   |
| 17-19 Sept.     | Federation meeting at Orford. Our Guest Speaker (on Saturday Evening) will be Professor Bill Jackson who will speak on <i>Fire Ecology</i> . We will be joined by other naturalists from around Tasmania. A full program will include a Fungi Walk in the Weilangta area guided by experts on the Saturday morning, coastal and intertidal walks and a slide show from the Marine Naturalists. Accommodation (including a hot meal on Saturday evening) is available. Book at a prior Club Meeting. |
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*Phil and Sue Collier report ....*, We have been having some VERY cold nights in Canberra this last couple of weeks- down to minus 5 and 6. It is quite an experience cycling to work in such weather although the days following these frosty mornings are very pleasant. We have been busy this autumn planting lots of native plants in our garden after clearing out the exotic "jungle" that the previous owners left us.

We had a great trip in March/April to Broome. We spent one week at the BBO (Broome Bird Observatory) attending a course "Wave the Waders Goodbye". Would you believe we met Len & Marjorie's son-in-law who was doing some sound recordings there. What a small world we live in! The course was excellent value, very professionally run, and a memorable experience; seeing thousands of waders leaving for Siberia. If any birdo's are interested, the course is usually programmed every year. One word of warning - it was very hot and humid. We also had a rather wet trip to the Kimberley with a number of "boggings". The highlight was seeing a number of Gouldian Finches for the first time.

We were interested to hear that Don is back later this year - it seems like only yesterday that he left.

The bushwalking here is not as difficult or spectacular and so we get back to Tasmania whenever we can. We managed a very good trip to Mt Gould in the late summer. There are however some very good spots in the Snowy Mountains in NSW which we have enjoyed this summer.

Regards to all at TFNC. If we happen to be in Hobart on the right evening we will try to make it to a meeting.

Sue and Phil Collier.

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A new booklet on **Finding and Identifying Tasmanian Insects** is available.

Illustrations in Pen and ink by **Janet Fenton**, a club member, are a feature. It is available from the Environment Centre, Bathurst Street, or see Janet at a meeting.

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**New Bulletin Editor-;** Don Hird

I am resuming editorship of the Bulletin after time in the outer islands of PNG. Thanks to Andrew for his work on the Bulletin over the last 10 issues.

After a big and varied experience in two years in PNG, I still find myself tussling with culture shock after six months back (so much cargo everywhere here!).

On the conservation front I had hoped to return to real progress on the area that I know best, native mammals. Extensive reports into ensuring comprehensive reservation status for all species, and on the State of the Environment generally, were underway as I departed. I must say that I am very disappointed in their results.

Certainly there has been much money recently expended in these and other areas of "the environment", but apparently little progress on the ground in biological conservation. Even for species of national significance such as the Bettong and the Eastern Barred Bandicoot we apparently still don't have adequate reserved habitat or even detailed characterisation of basic biology and minimum reserve size required for sustaining viable populations. A major concern has to be the "once and for all" basis of Telecom-sale based and similar expenditure and reporting, we won't fix continuous issues in *ad hoc* ways.

Contrast this to Victoria where cooperation between naturalists and government has produced detailed mammal distribution maps and habitat types. Tasmania has incurred massive habitat alteration from woodchip and other forestry, and from 1080 poisoning, compared to Victoria in recent decades. And yet, despite the collateral damage to non-target species, there has been remarkable little dialogue, cooperation or compensatory research and conservation in Tasmania.

Its not too late to make progress in these areas, but it is disappointing to see the continuing "shouting across the abyss" conservation debate in Tasmania. We needn't panic but we do need effective conservation leadership to prioritise, and, above all, to maintain dialogue.



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*If you are planning to attend an outing but have not been to the meeting prior, phone to check as to the timing of the excursion as sometimes unforeseen changes occur.*

**Reminder;** we encourage members to share rides on excursions. This is usually arranged on the morning of the excursion and a donation of around 5 cents per km travelled towards the driver's expenses is suggested.

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Thurs. 7 October. 7.45p.m.: Jon Marsden-Smedley, a fire protection officer with Parks and Wildlife will talk on the seasonal issue of *Fire in Tasmanian Natural Environments*.

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Saturday 9 October. 8 a.m.: A walk to to McGregor's Peak on the Forestier Peninsula. Please note that some four or more hours of walking of moderate standard is anticipated. There are a variety of vegetation types in the area and we will look for landsnails and fungi, amongst other things. Gloves may be useful for investigating leaf-litter.

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Thurs. 4 November 7.45p.m.: David Leaman will speak on *Time, Life and Risk*. David is a geologist who will discuss some of the major features of the pageant of life on our planet, on a geological time scale.

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November Excursion. TBA: As this bulletin goes to press David is unavailable and the excursion details will be finalised at the November meeting. We anticipate a walk led by David illustrating examples of geological features from his talk.

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Thurs. 2 December 7.45p.m.: Members are requested to prepare short contributions to one of our occasional Members' Nights. This is an opportunity to share personal natural history interests. Contributions to a seasonal supper appreciated.

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December Excursion TBA: A walk on LaBillardiere Peninsula, south Bruny Island is planned, with the option of staying over on Bruny for the weekend. This area is renowned for orchids and remains one of the best preserved areas on Bruny.

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Thanks to the *Federation* delegates, club organisers and visiting speakers who helped make the last Federation Weekend Meeting at Orford such a success.

Winners of this year's *Environment Award for Children's Literature* were announced on 5<sup>th</sup> June (World Environment Day).

This year's winner in the Picture Book section is *Islands in my Garden* by Jim Howes, illustrated by Roland Harvey (Roland Harvey Books). This is an amusing book about the little beasts we can find under logs and stones, in crevices and soil, even in a suburban garden. In this book, though, there are some unlikely ones too.

The winner in the Non-Fiction section is a series produced by the Gould League of Victoria. They are small and not too expensive soft-cover guides for young kids; *Australian Guide to Pondlife* and *Australian Guide to Seashores* are recent titles. They show, mostly with good, clear photos, some of the creatures you are likely to find (e.g. shark eggs on the seashore), and include photos of kids out there finding things and having fun.

The *Environment Award* is Australia-wide and was inaugurated in 1994 by a couple of Tasmanians. It is sponsored by the *Wilderness Society*. The short listed books are well worth a read.

Janet Fenton, (Co-organiser and member of the judging panel).

Following comments on the *State of the Environment* process in the last *Bulletin*, the club has received feedback from the responsible officers. We may be represented on committees responsible for the next edition of these recurrent publications, with potential to contribute to prioritisation of Tasmanian conservation issues.

Max Banks will present an extended version of his *In the Footsteps of Darwin* lecture series as a summer school in late January 2000. The course, covering aspects of Tasmanian geology and history, will be run through Jane Franklin Hall and extend over 5 days. Enquire at a meeting for further details.

The **Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts** is presenting a display of *Ferdinand Bauer; Natural History Drawings 1801-1803*. Bauer was selected by Sir Joseph Banks, on the basis of his reputation as an illustrator, to join the *Investigator* expedition. This exhibition comprises high quality facsimile plates of Bauer's finished illustrations of Australian fauna. They are the only copies held in Tasmania and are highly recommended.

Launceston Field Naturalists are celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the weekend of October 23-24 with a Saturday evening dinner followed next day by an excursion to Myrtle Park (scene of the club's first outing) and a barbecue at *Skemp's*, Myrtle Bank, at 1230. RSVP Dr Al Pegler 6344 1076 (phone / fax).

**Subs:** after several years of pegged subs the time has come .... New rates from year 2000 are as follow

*Naturalist* only individuals \$15, libraries \$20 (overseas \$25)

Membership individuals \$25, families \$30, concession / junior \$20.

*Subs are Due* by the end of the year.

## Outing Reports

### **Federation of Field Naturalists Weekend, King Island 26-27<sup>th</sup> Sep** by Andrew Walsh.

About 20 people from around the state (including myself & my wife Amanda, Kevin Bonham and David Ratkowsky) made it to King Island for the Federation Weekend hosted by the local field naturalists club.

The TFNC four flew up on Friday morning, piloted by Rob Taylor's son Matthew (Matthew tells me Rob is having a wonderful time skydiving in Africa and white water rafting down the Zambize river!). Using a hire car we drove to Sea Elephant point (no sea elephants to were seen, or sea for that matter!) where we arrived just in time to watch a sea eagle soar low over the lookout platform. Amanda and I then dropped Kevin and David off somewhere between the lookout and Naracoopá, where they spent the remainder of the afternoon collecting

along the roadside forest, while Amanda & I drove around the island.

That evening the King Island Field Naturalists Club hosted a barbecue at the Grassy accommodation where everyone was staying, and the following Saturday the field trips began. Led by a local who was the last manager of the now closed Scheelite mine, we were given a guided tour of the enormous open cut and the surrounding land on which the mine company had spent two million dollars rehabilitating the site. In the afternoon, the King Island Field Nats led an impressive walk into the Grassy River Gorge. From the air, King Island appears extremely flat, consisting mostly of pasture truncated occasionally by small patches of forest. This appearance conceals the fact that in some places small waterfalls can be found in the bottom of steep gullies.

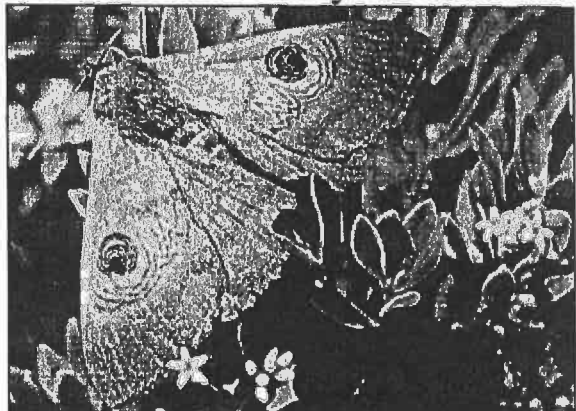


Field Naturalists at the Calcified Forest on King Island on the Federation Weekend 1998.

On the Saturday night we had a very sociable dinner at the local Grassy Club. On the Sunday morning delegates from various clubs met for a short Federation business meeting while remaining club members walked around the Grassy township area.

After the meeting we all drove to the Calcified Forest on the south west side of the island where a short walk through dunes took us to a spectacular landing where dunes had claimed the forest some 5000 years ago, causing a chemical reaction that resulted in calcification of much of the woody tissues of the trees. As the dunes erode, the calcified deposits are exposed revealing eerie bleached stem-like structures.

After lunch we visited the dramatic Seal Rocks, where the Roaring Forties, and the seas they churn up, crash against the literally breathtaking cliffs and rocks. After spending some time exploring the area, the TFNC four had to leave early to catch our flight back to Hobart, which ended a perfect weekend as the flight home took us on a direct diagonal line across Tasmania in crystal clear skies.



Moth found beside track to Calcified Forest, King Island (probably 'Peacock Moth', *Dasytopodia selenophora*). Photo A. Walsh.

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### PLATYPUS

by Isabella Thomson (age 8)

Platypus beside the river lies  
Gone to sleep and closed his eyes  
Suddenly he got woken up  
By a huge animal that held him up  
It wasn't like a gorilla's hand  
It was wrapped around him  
like rubber-band  
Suddenly he found himself flat  
On the ground with an elephant  
looking straight down at him.

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### LAND OF THE GREEN SPONGE

by Tam Kincade, April 1997

Howling winds and thick mists  
Greet me as I cross the plateau,  
Knocking me from my feet  
And soaking me from head to toe.

Jagged peaks and spongy ground,  
Tiring my legs and rolling my feet  
As I plough across Nature's outcast,  
This desolate island in the sea.

Who could love a place like this?  
Who could never want to leave?  
Desolation isn't part of it,  
It's Nature you can't believe.

Ageless beauty and rolling plains,  
A myriad of lakes and plants,  
Gigantic penguin colonies,  
And humungous sea-elephants.

My heart will always be here,  
Inside me part will want to know-  
Are albatross chicks hatching?  
Is the plateau covered in snow?

Too soon I leave this beauty  
And I will look back to see  
That fair majestic land-  
Macquarie Island, of the sea.

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See last page to find out who won the poetry competition.

## October 3<sup>rd</sup> Hastings Thermal Pool.

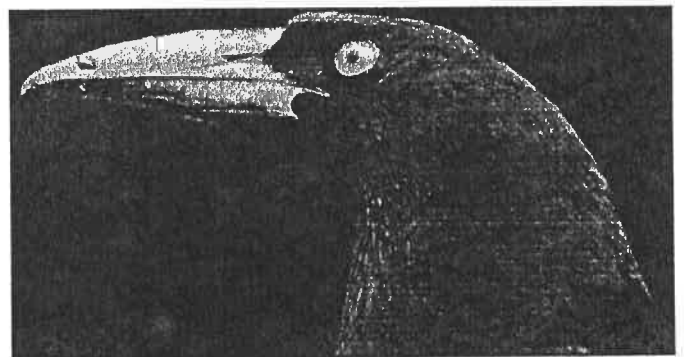


Julia Scott , Marc Gates, Genevieve Gates, Stephen Gates, and Amanda Thomson in the thermal pool at Hastings on the October excursion.

The October excursion visited the Hastings Thermal pool area. Originally it was planned as a follow up to the fascinating talk by Phillip Bethge on Platypus, as we were hoping to catch a glimpse of one in the streams nearby the pool. As well, Spotted Tailed Quolls are often observed around the pool during the day. However, it was announced at the October meeting that the club will also host a barbecue to take advantage of the facilities at the pool. This idea was conceived after the last bulletin was mailed out, however the next barbecue will be advertised well in advance so as to give all members and opportunity to attend.

As it transpired, the weather on the Saturday was very bad- cold, windy and raining and only ten members braved the conditions. We were greeted by a Quoll upon arrival, and those brave enough to take a swim observed a Pademelon Wallaby near

the pool. After lunch (which we had to vigorously defend from the marauding Currawongs) we took a stroll around the creek walks. Genevieve found a number of fungi including *Daldinia* (Cramp Ball), *Bertrandia astatogala*, *Entoloma rodwayi*, *Entoloma* sp. and handsome *Stropharia formosa*. After the walk the group visited the Hastings Caves where a fruiting fungus (unidentified by the observers) was seen in the cave.



Currawong at Hastings Thermal Pools. Photo A. Walsh.

**And the winner is....**



**Isabella Thomson**



Congratulations Isabella and many thanks to the other entrants of our competition. Isabella's prize will be presented at the meeting in November (5<sup>th</sup>).