



The Tasmanian Naturalist

No. 41

MAY 1975

Registered at the G. P. O. Hobart, Tasmania, for transmission by post as a periodical

Supplement to the Bulletin of Tasmanian Field Naturalists' Club

Editor : D.G. Thomas

Annual Subscription \$2.00

FURTHER CRAGGY ISLAND RECORDS

J.S. Winray

CRAGGY ISLAND is in eastern Bass Strait between the Furneaux Group and Kents Group. Some details of it were given in *Tasmanian Naturalist* No. 30.: 4-6, August 1972 and were the result of my two day visit in March and April of that year. Two more visits have since been paid to the island. They were from 14-22 June, 1972 and on 6 November, 1972.

BIRDS

Two of the fifteen species mentioned in the first article were tentative records. I took field glasses for the June visit and was able to determine these doubtful species. I found that a pair of Nankeen Kestrels Falco cenchroides and a pair of Peregrine Falcons Falco peregrinus were present. As well, I was able to determine a single small bird which was seen on the island in March but was not mentioned in the first article because I could not obtain an adequate description without field glasses. It was a female Flame Robin Petroica phoenicia.

In June Fairy Prions Pachyptila turtur and Common Diving Petrels Pelecanoides urinatrix were still landing in large numbers on the island at night. The latter species was even found occupying burrows under large boulders. In November I checked some Common Diving Petrel burrows on the southern side of the island. The nestlings ranged from a tiny downy bird to one which was adult size and had no down left on its wings, throat or head. During the same visit I found one Fairy Prion on an egg under a small boulder at the summit of the north east peak. I collected the following specimens in March :- Pelecanoides urinatrix - National Museum of Victoria B10881, Queen Victoria Museum 1972.2.37; Pachyptila turtur - NMV B10882, QVM 1972.2.38.

Little Penguins Eudyptula minor were still coming ashore in large numbers in June. Moulting had finished and neither eggs nor immature birds were seen. On the late afternoon of 17 June I noticed a Little Penguin flock just off the north coast and it landed soon after. There were at least eight more flocks and the three largest ones contained from three to four hundred birds each. They were moving slowly towards the shore but were still up to 800 metres off it when I stopped watching.

On 19 June Miss Christie and I watched the flocks until a small one came ashore at the middle of the north coast at 4.10 p.m. This flock kept close together until the birds were a few metres offshore when they spread suddenly and landed. Next day Miss Christie watched them and the first flock landed at 4.25 p.m. No flocks were seen off the south coast during this visit. In November some Little Penguins were sitting on eggs in burrows.

In March no Muttonbirds Puffinus tenuirostris were seen but in June Miss Christie and I found five desiccated carcasses at the western and north eastern ends of the island. One specimen was taken to the National Museum of Victoria and discarded after checking. Although Sooty Oystercatchers Haematopus unicolor were absent in March, at least fourteen were present in June. In November this species was nesting and I saw two nests with eggs while another member of the party noticed a third nest with eggs. One new seabird species, the Giant Petrel Macronectes giganteus, was seen in June. A pair flew close inshore past the island. No Silver Gulls Larus novaehollandiae were seen during the three visits. However, on the way to Kents Group on 30 November 1972, I saw some Silver Gulls just south west of the island and then a few landed on one of the rocks at its western end.

Two pairs of Cape Barren Geese Cereopsis novaehollandiae were seen in March and a flock of thirteen was seen in June. During the latter visit I watched one bird feeding on Rookery Fireweed Senecio capillifolius at the summit of one of the peaks. In November seven goslings (two and a group of five) and twelve adults were seen. Two of the latter were moulting and could not fly. The other ten were seen together.

About twenty Brown Quail Synoicus australis were seen on the island in both March and June. During the latter visit one was caught in a boxtrap set amongst Coast Saltbush Atriplex cinerea and Australian Hollyhock Lavatera plebeja var. tomentosa on the northern slope below the central saddle (NMV B11171).

Two Brown Falcons Falco berigora were seen on the island in both June and November. A White-breasted Sea Eagle Haliaeetus leucogaster visited the island on one day in June. When it left the island it headed for Sheoak Point, Flinders Island.

Two of the species recorded in March were not present during the later visits. They were the Welcome Swallow Hirundo neoxena and Grey Fantail Rhipidura fuliginosa.

Finally I will contrast the numbers of the other birds seen during March and June. Pacific Gull Larus pacificus (9 March, 33 June); White-faced Heron Ardea novaehollandiae (16, 2); Black-faced Cormorant Phalacrocorax fuscescens (12, 1); Australasian Gannet Morus serrator (1, 2); Blackbird *Turdus merula (12 plus, 30 plus) and Grey-breasted Silveryeye Zosterops lateralis (15 plus on the first two visits and 20 plus in November). The Grey-breasted Silveryeye specimen which I collected in March is QVM 1972, 2, 39.

These records bring the number of species recorded to twenty one, excluding the Muttonbird.

PLANTS

A list of twenty six species was given in the original article. In June five more species were found on the island. I found the native Water Buttons Cotula coronopifolia and the three alien species Barley Grass *Hordeum leporinum, Fourleaf Allseed *Polycarpon tetraphyllum and the Common Sowthistle

*Sonchus oleraceus in shallow soil on coastal outcrops at the base of the gully running south from the central saddle. They occurred, together with other native species, over thirty square metres and were not present anywhere else on the island. These four herbs were grazed heavily by the Cape Barren Geese which might have introduced them to the island. Miss Christie found the alien Common Chickweed *Stellaria media amongst Blue Tussockgrass Poa poliformis and Rookery Firewood Senecio capillifolius on the ridge west of the central saddle. Later I noticed that it grew right down to the central saddle and then a little way down the gully to the south of it.

In November I collected specimens of Stiff Ryegrass *Lolium lolium from the shallow coastal soil mentioned above. This grass was not seen anywhere else.

One of the species on the original list was misdetermined because the specimens were weathered and incomplete. I obtained good specimens in November and found that the Foxtail Fescue *Vulpia megalura occurs on the island and not the Rats-tail Fescue *Vulpia myuros. Specimens of two uncertain species from the first visit have since been determined at the National Herbarium of Victoria. They are the Sea Pearlwort Sagina maritima and Leafy Peppergrass Lepidium foliosum.

These records bring the number of plants recorded on the island to thirty two. Six are alien species and they make up eighteen percent of the total. A complete list of Craggy Island plants is given below.

LICHENS

More specimens were collected in June and, like the March specimens, were donated to the National Herbarium of Victoria. The herbarium numbers of the full collection are 1,013,013-1,013,039 and 1,013,041-1,013,067. About twenty five species were obtained from the island. Two were listed in the original article and nine more have been determined by Mr. R. B. Filson. One of these, which came from coastal granite and looks much like an alga, is a new record for Bass Strait. It is Mastodia tessellata Hook. f. & Harv. apud Hook. The other eight species are Anaptychia pseudospeciosa var. tremulans (Müll. Arg.) Kurokawa, Caloplaca elegans (Link.) Th. fr., Diploicia canescens (Dicks.) Mass., Lecanora atra (Huds.) Ach., Ochrolechia parella (L.) Mass., Parmelia caperata (L.) Ach., Physcia caesia (Hoffm.) Hampe and Lichina pygmaea var. intermedia Bab.

REPTILES

Only Metallic Skinks Leiopisma metallicum were seen or collected in March and June. All the specimens have been lodged at the National Museum of Victoria (NMV D18136, D42519-42525). In November I disturbed two White's Skinks Egernia whitii under boulders on the summit of the north east peak but was not fast enough to catch either of them.

LIST OF CRAGGY ISLAND PLANTS, 1972

An asterisk marks a non-Tasmanian species. H marks specimens lodged at the University of Tasmania Herbarium and M marks specimens lodged at the National Herbarium of Victoria.

FERN

HM Asplenium obtusatum
Shore Spleenwort

MONOCOTYLEDONS

Poaceae

HM* Vulpia megalura
Foxtail Fescue

HM Poa poiformis
Blue Tussockgrass

HM Sporobolus virginicus
Salt Couch

HM* Lolium loliaceum
Stiff Ryegrass

HM* Hordeum leporinum
Barley Grass

Liliaceae

HM Dianella revoluta
Blackanther Flaxlily

H Bulbine semibarbata
Leek Lily

DICOTYLEDONS

Chenopodiaceae

HM Atriplex cinerea
Coast Saltbush

H Rhagodia baccata
Seaberry Saltbush

HM Chenopodium glaucum ssp.
ambiguum
Coast Goosefoot

H Salicornia quinqueflora
Beaded Glasswort

Aizoaceae

M Disphyma blackii (formerly D.
australe)
Rounded Noonflower

M Carpobrotus rossii
Karkalla

M Tetragonia implexicoma
Bower Spinach

Portulacaceae

Calandrinia calyptrata
Pink Purslane

Caryophyllaceae

HM* Stellaria media
Common Chickweed

HM Sagina maritima
Sea Pearlwort

HM Spergularia media
Coastal Sandspurrey

*Polycarpon tetraphyllum
Fourleaf Allseed

Cruciferae

HM Lepidium foliosum
Leafy Peppergrass

Crassulaceae

Crassula sieberiana
Austral Stonecrop

Mimosaceae

HM* Albizia lophanta
Cape Wattle

Rutaceae

HM Correa alba
White Correa

Malvaceae

HM Lavatera plebeja var. tomentosa
Australian Hollyhock

Apiaceae

H Apium prostratum
Sea Celery

Apocynaceae

H Alyxia buxifolia
Sea Box

Lobeliaceae

H Lobelia alata
Angled Lobelia

Asteraceae

HM Brachycome diversifolia var.
maritima
Tall Daisy

M Cotula coronopifolia
Water Buttons

HM Senecio capillifolius
Rookery Fireweed

* Sonchus oleraceus
Common Sowthistle

PLANTS ON MOUNT WELLINGTON, Feb. 1975

Kelsey Aves

ON 22 February, 1975, the Club's field excursion was to Mt. Wellington. Apparently utterly destroyed by the terrible fires which devastated southern Tasmania in February 1967, the vegetation of the mountain has shown remarkable powers of regeneration, especially on the lower slopes, though more slowly the nearer one gets to the summit, where harsher climatic conditions naturally inhibit lush growth. However, on the moor at the head of the N. W. Bay River near the 'ice rink', the peat itself had burned so deep that recovery seemed impossible. Yet many of the fascinating cushion plants Abrotanella forsterioides have survived and are slowly recovering their domed shape and we were delighted with unusually large masses of Gentian Gentianella diemensis in flower, also Celmisia, Helichrysum, and Euphrasia spp. in quantity. The 'elfin' trees of Snow Gum Eucalyptus coccifera near Mt. Arthur, however, suffered very severely in the fire and although many have coppiced, there is little growth on the trunks and boughs. Waratah Telopea truncata and Richea dracophylla are regenerating well from the Springs to the shelter shed at 1,000 M. It was also noted that most species seem to have flowered later than usual this year, perhaps due to the unusually cold early summer, including January.

The party selected three areas for observation - the first 1 Km of the Collins Bonnet track at about 1,100 M., the head of the N. W. Bay River (ice rink' area) at 1,180 M., and an area from the Pinnacle about 0.5 Km south at 1,270 M.

We are very much indebted to Mrs. Margaret Allan for listing and checking identification of flowering and fruiting plants of these regions. Her lists follow.

PLANTS RECORDED FROM COLLINS BONNET TRACK, 1100M 22.2.75

Acaena anserinifolia fruit
Asperula conferta fls.
Astelia alpina fruit

Baeckea gunniana fls.
Bauera rubioides fls.
Billardieria longiflora fruit
Calorophus minor (Hypolaena lateriflora of Rodway)

Carpha alpina
Celmisia asteliaefolia fls.
Coprosma sp.

Epacris serpyllifolia spent fls.
Epilobium gunnianum (?) fls. & fruit
Eucalyptus coccifera
Erigeron pappochroma fls. & fruit
Euphrasia diemenica fls.
" striata fls.

Gahnia psittacorum
Gentianella diemensis fls.
Geranium microphyllum fls.
Gleichenia sp.
Haloragis sp.
" micrantha fls.

<i>Helichrysum expansifolium</i> fls.	<i>Pooranthera microphylla</i> fls.
" <i>ledifolium</i> fls.	<i>Prasophyllum alpinum</i> fls.
" <i>scorpioides</i> fls.	" <i>suttonii</i> fls.
<i>Hierochloa redolens</i> (Sweet Holy Grass)	<i>Ranunculus</i> spp.
<i>Hydrocotyle sibthorpioides</i> fruit	<i>Restio australis</i>
<i>Leptospermum lanigerum</i>	<i>Richea sprengelioides</i>
<i>Lomatia polymorpha</i> fls.	<i>Rubus gunnianus</i>
<i>Luzula</i> sp.	<i>Scaevola hookeri</i> fls. & fruit
<i>Monotoca empetrifolia</i>	<i>Senecio lautus</i> fls.
<i>Olearia obcordata</i>	<i>Sprengelia incarnata</i>
" <i>phlogopappa</i>	<i>Tasmania lanceolata</i>
<i>Orites diversifolia</i>	<i>Telopea truncata</i>
" <i>revoluta</i>	<i>Thelymitra venosa</i> fls.
<i>Oxylobium ellipticum</i>	<i>Veronica nivea</i> fls.
<i>Pimelea sericea</i> fls.	<i>Viola hederacea</i>
<i>Poa alpina</i>	<i>Wahlenbergia saxicola</i> fls.
<i>Polystichum proliferum</i>	

PLANTS RECORDED AT "ICE RINK", 1180M 22.2.75

<i>Abrotanella forsterioides</i>	<i>Helichrysum scorpioides</i> fls.
<i>Acaena anserinifolia</i>	<i>Leptospermum lanigerum</i>
<i>Asperula conferta</i> fls.	" <i>rupestre</i> fls.
<i>Astelia alpina</i> fruit	<i>Luzula</i> sp.
<i>Baeckia gunniana</i> fls.	<i>Monotoca empetrifolia</i>
<i>Bellenden montana</i>	<i>Olearia algida</i> fls.
<i>Carpha alpina</i>	" <i>ledifolia</i> fls.
<i>Coprosma</i> sp.	" <i>pinifolia</i>
<i>Craspedia alpina</i> fls.	<i>Orites acicularis</i>
<i>Cyathodes dealbata</i> berries	" <i>revoluta</i>
<i>Drosera arcturi</i> fruit	<i>Ourisia integrifolia</i> fruit
<i>Epacris serpyllifolia</i> spent fls.	<i>Pimelea sericea</i> fls.
<i>Epilobium gunnianum</i> (?) fls & fruit	<i>Prasophyllum alpinum</i> fls.
<i>Erigeron pappochroma</i> fls.	" <i>suttonii</i> fls.
<i>Eucalyptus coccoifera</i>	<i>Restio australis</i>
<i>Euphrasia diemenica</i> fls.	<i>Rubus gunnianus</i>
" <i>striata</i> fls.	<i>Scaevola hookeri</i> fls.
<i>Gentianella diemensis</i> fls.	<i>Sphagnum</i>
<i>Gleichenia</i> sp.	<i>Sprengelia incarnata</i>
<i>Helichrysum backhousii</i> fls.	<i>Tasmania lanceolata</i>
" <i>hookeri</i> fls.	<i>Thelymitra venosa</i>
" <i>ledifolium</i> fls.	

PLANTS RECORDED AT THE PINNACLE, 1270M 22.2.75

<i>Acaena montana</i> fruit	<i>Leptospermum rupestre</i> fls.
<i>Baeckea gunniana</i> fls.	<i>Luzula</i> sp.
<i>Bellenden montana</i> fruit	<i>Lycopodium fastigiatum</i> (?)
<i>Celmisia asteliaefolia</i> fls.	<i>Monotoca empetrifolia</i>
" <i>saxifraga</i> fls.	<i>Orites acicularis</i>
<i>Cythodes dealbata</i>	" <i>revoluta</i>
<i>Epacris serpyllifolia</i>	<i>Pentachondra pumila</i> fls. & fruit
<i>Euphrasia striata</i> fls.	<i>Richea scoparia</i>
<i>Exocarpos humifusus</i>	" <i>sprengelioides</i>
<i>Helichrysum ledifolium</i> fls.	

MARIA ISLAND BIRDS

L. E. Wall

(concluded from *Tasmanian Naturalist* No. 40)

I am not aware of any other published records except a note by Hall (1910) about a King Penguin which I regarded as unsubstantiated (ref *Tas. Naturalist* No. 33) and a few notes on individual species appearing in *Tas. Bird Report* No. 3.

During a visit to the northern end of Maria Island in December 1961 I saw a Superb Blue Wren, and it seems this is the last record of the species on the island: many observers in recent years have failed to find it. I did not see any Forty-spotted Pardalotes and they had never been recorded from Maria Island at that time. Neither the Brown Thornbill nor the Tasmanian Thornbill were seen during that visit.

Another visit was made in April 1974 when I went as far south as the Neck. In the vicinity of Four Mile Creek, where the track moves out of pure Blue Gum forest into a mixed forest of White Gum and Blue Gum, were many Forty-spotted Pardalotes, the first I had seen on the island, and it was in the same area that I saw a Brown Thornbill. I did not see any Tasmanian Thornbills during this visit. A Wedge-tailed Eagle was added to the list also, a single bird soaring round the southern slopes of Mt. Maria.

In November 1974 a further brief visit was made to the northern end of the island allowing two hours of observations about Darlington and Bernacchi's Creek. The Tasmanian Thornbill was seen here and a suggestion that the recent introduction of the Tasmanian Native Hen had been unsuccessful was proved false - two were seen on the creek bank.

The Forty-spotted Pardalote provides a puzzle. On three visits I have never found it near Darlington where the trees are predominantly Blue Gum, but it is very plentiful between Four Mile Creek and the Neck where the forest has a good mixture of Blue Gum and White Gum. However, D.R. Milledge and D.G. Thomas have found it plentiful near Darlington. There are other indications, as yet unconfirmed, that the species is to some extent nomadic outside the breeding season.

The question also arises - was the species present in 1912 when Tasmanian Field Naturalists' Club members camped on the island? It is not clear from the published

Camp Report that members covered the overland route from Darlington to the Neck though it is certain that a party did travel to the Neck by boat. I am inclined to think that the colony may have been there but remained undetected.

The Tasmanian Thornbill and the Brown Thornbill also provide interesting speculation. Both Legge and Hall recorded the Brown Thornbill only, though it must be remembered that at the time of Legge's visit the Tasmanian Thornbill had been "lost" for many years and it was not until early in this century that it was "re-discovered" and its status as a true species confirmed. Because of his intimate knowledge of Australian ornithology Hall would have been well aware of this and it seems doubtful that he would have overlooked it if he had seen it on Maria Island. I did not see either of these thornbills in the vicinity of Darlington in 1961, but in April 1974 I saw one Brown Thornbill near Four Mile Creek and no others, while in November 1974 I saw a few Tasmanian Thornbills near Darlington. D.R. Milledge, with a fairly extensive knowledge of Maria Island, says that the Tasmanian Thornbill is not uncommon but he has never seen a Brown Thornbill.

Other additions to the Bird List for Maria Island are - (1) J.R. Napier has told me that he has seen a Southern Black-backed (or Dominican) Gull on the island, and (2) Tasmanian Bird Report No. 3 records the Turnstone.

Footnote: An error occurred in the first part of this paper (Tas. Naturalist No. 40, Feb. 1975). In the 7th and 8th lines from the bottom of the page the name "Yellow-billed Parrot" should read "Yellow-bellied Parrot".

References:

- Legge, W.V. 1888. A first list of the birds of Maria Island.
Pap. Proc. R. Soc. Tas. for 1887; 83-97
- Hall, R. 1912. Tas. Field Naturalists' Club Easter Camp-out
 1912 to Maria Island - The Birds of Maria Island.

REMINDER OF OLD BATTERY POINT ZOO

Michael Sharland

AT "Beaumaris," Battery Point, Hobart, more than half a century ago, there was a zoo, kept by Mrs. Mary Roberts, a self-styled zoologist with a distinct "way" with animals. The collection, a mixture of birds and mammals, some of them exotic, numbered between 200 and 300 animals, and was contained in her extensive grounds on the present site of the Postal Department's depot. Mrs. Roberts was acclaimed by the Zoological Society of London for being the first to breed the Tasmanian devil, of which she once had three or four pairs. A number of Thylacines also passed through her hands. Just how many is not known. But she had no success in breeding from them.

After her death, on 27 November, 1921, her trustees made a gift of the collection to the Hobart City Council. And so it formed the nucleus of what became known as the Hobart Zoo, established with Government assistance to the extent of £250 a year. A former sandstone quarry opposite Government House was chosen as the site of this zoo, which remained in existence until about 1933, since when there has been no "official" zoo - one financed by public funds.