

# THE LAUNCESTON NATURALIST

Issued to members of the Launceston Field Naturalists Club as a contribution to club activities.



The aim of the Launceston Field Naturalists Club is to encourage the study of all aspects of natural history and to support the conservation of our natural heritage

**Volume XLVI I I No. 1**

**October/November 2014**

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<b>Committee</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Ms Campbell, Mr Geeves, Ms McGlynn, Mr Ralph, Mr Warren, Ms Wright</b>

**Meetings 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of month, Feb-Dec at Scotch-Oakburn College, Penquite Rd Newstead**

## PROGRAM

### DECEMBER

- Tuesday 2**                    **General Meeting ~ *The Year That Was* and Photographic Competition**
- Sunday 7**                    **Christmas @ Skemps**

### JANUARY 2015

- Friday 16 to  
Sunday 18**                    **Field Trip ~ Ben Lomond (more details this newsletter)**
- Sunday 25**                    **Field Trip ~ Vale of Belvoir (more details this newsletter)**

### FEBRUARY

- Tuesday 3**                    **General Meeting ~ Guest Speaker: Nigel Forteach, *Life of Four Springs Lake***
- Saturday 14**                    **Field Trip ~ Four Springs Lake with Nigel Forteach**
- Saturday 28**                    **Skemp Day**

### MARCH

- Tuesday 3**                    **General Meeting ~ Guest Speaker: To be confirmed**
- Sunday 8 or 15**                    **Field Trip ~ To be confirmed**
- Saturday 21**                    **Skemp Day**
- Monday 23**                    **Social Night ~ Venue to be discussed at December General Meeting**

The full January to June 2015 program should be available soon at  
<http://www.lfnc.org.au/meetings.htm>

## **Skemp Report:~**

The damage recently caused by a child has been repaired. John did an excellent job of preparing the wall and I replaced the cement sheet as well as repairing the fly screen door. Thanks to Tony and his ute the screen was moved to my home where it was far easier to effect the repairs.

With the combined efforts of Grant, John, Rob and I, we have half-filled the new fire wood storage shed ready for future winters. Some stove wood has also been added to the trailer shed.

A strange year has seen little growth of pepper berries and the grass. While I have not been able to restock my dwindling supplies of native pepper it also means that the new ride on mower remains new, although Grant believes we will need to get it out soon.

In early October Tom Treloggen, Tony and Christine, Shirley, Karen and I started the task of relocating the framed pictures on the wall in the Centre. They were all cleaned by Christine and then moved to a more secure but visible location. Their relocation freed up wall space to put up more of the posters the Club has on natural history subjects. In November the work was completed by Jill with granddaughter Taylor, Prue, the McGlynn's, the Ralphs, Karen and myself. The walls of the building are covered in posters and thanks Lois for ensuring the aesthetics of the positioning.

Tammy Gordon, David Maynard and Judy Rainbird from the QVMAG visited Skemps on Tuesday 18 November to look at the facilities for Bug Day Out on 30 November. They were impressed with what they saw and came up with suggestions on how to run the day. We all walked the Watergate Nature Trail and then to the start of the Zigzag trail to look for engaeus mounds and we were not disappointed. Along the way we saw an echidna and David and Tammy stopped to take some promotional photographs. We also saw pademelons and a wallaby, whilst David found enough insects to excite his interest.

Noel Manning

## **Puggle**

**November:~** Tina McGlynn asked members to provide the christian name and maiden name of Mrs. Rowland Skemp and her occupation. Karen correctly answered the question with Florence Kearney and that she was a teacher.

## **Sightings**

**October:~** John Elliott reported a brown goshawk near City Park, a boobook owl calling at Punchbowl Reserve and a pair of wood ducks in Claremont Street, Launceston.

**November:~** Anne Tolson saw orange bellied parrots at Melaleuca. Prue Wright saw masses of *Pultenaea prostrata* at the property 'Kingston'. Alison Green heard a *Ninox novaeseelandiae*, boobook owl calling at 10pm at night, the first mopoke she has heard calling for years. Shirley Anthony had seen a white faced heron at Machins Reserve, Tony Geeves has seen a tiger snake at Notley Fern Gorge, a spotted quoll at Lake Edgar Campground and a brown quoll at Ted Beach. John Elliott has seen bar-tailed godwits at Marion Beach, a brown falcon at Amy Road and what he thought was a white goshawk at Longwood Avenue. Marion

Simmons talked about a magpie that died in her garden and how the male stayed for two to three hours near the dead bird.

**Library Report:**~ Tina McGlynn showed members Simon Fearn's book, *Snakes of Tasmania*. The book is the first in the Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery's Natural History Series.

**General:**~ Members were advised that short talks are to be included at each General Meeting. A roster for these talks will be circulated. The talk need only be 1 to 2 minutes, maximum of 5 minutes. Talks can be on a natural history subject you are interested in or you may like to make a report on something you have observed.

### **Short Talk**

**November:**~ Noel Manning gave a presentation on the Skemp Snail which included some images and acknowledged Kevin Bonham for providing the information

**Christmas at Skemps** ~ Members are reminded that they are welcome to invite their family and friends to join them at the end of year function at Skemps, which will be held on Sunday 7 December.

If you and your guests would like to participate in the Secret Santa (optional), please provide an appropriate wrapped gift up to \$10 to put under the tree and ensure your name is placed on Santa's list when you arrive at the Centre. Please label your gift 'male' or 'female' if the gift is gender specific. Everyone attending will go in the draw for the lucky door prize so get your ticket on arrival. If you bring a child you can bring a gift for them, well labeled with their name, which will be given out separately. Santa will make an appearance prior to afternoon tea.

Please bring your own lunch, the BBQ will be lit if you would like to bring something to cook, and a plate of food to share for afternoon tea would be appreciated

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Twenty members and four guests attended the Annual General Meeting by having a meal at Kain's Restaurant in Launceston. We all enjoyed our meals, the servings were generous and no-one could complain they went home hungry.

Tom Trelloggen started the evenings proceeding by giving his report. "Hello and welcome. Another year has gone already. Also, a very warm welcome to Prof. Nigel Forteath, our new patron, and thank you to those attending tonight's meeting.

Once again another successful but challenging year and I would like to start by reminding you of some of the activities and achievements of the Launceston Field Naturalists Club for the past year.

In November of 2013 we held a ceremony at Skemps to unveil a plaque and plant Blackwood trees in memory of our greatly esteemed member John Simmons, a special day despite the weather. Also in November club members had a trip to the east coast, myself and other club members attended at St Helens, the memorial service for Ruth

Upon a long time member of the Club. (Spending the weekend in the area).

Members were kindly hosted by Marion Simmons and Roy and Louise Skabo, at the holiday homes in Garden's Road. We were taken on walks around Binalong Bay area and drove to Ansons Bay Road, via Garden's Back Road and returned via St Helens. On Sunday we visited Winifred Curtis Reserve at Upper Scamander on our way home (return journey).

Our guest speaker for November was fellow member Simon Fearn, who spoke about *Backyard Biodiversity*. During December we held our photo competition and *The Year That Was* (slideshow) and Christmas at Skemps.

When we returned in February our guest speaker, Dr Frances Mowling spoke about her time in South Australian Field Naturalists, followed by an outing to the Kate Reed Reserve on a very warm day and tree maintenance at Skemps. During March we held a members night and an outing to Narawntapu National Park, also we had a social evening at the Commercial Hotel.

In April our guest speaker was John Douglas who spoke to us about Spiders, this was followed by his book launch 'Webs' at the Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery (QVMAG), with a visit to the 'Skullbone Experiment' exhibition, then lunch in the café. Some members joined the Australian Plant Society for a fungi walk at Notley Gorge, at Skemps we held a book sale for excess library books.

For our May speaker for the John Skemp Memorial Lecture was Genevieve Gates and David Ratkowsky speaking about fungi and launching of her book. Followed by a fungi foray to 'Liffey Falls'.

In June, Tineke Morrison spoke to us about 'Macquarie Harbour', Skemps hosted a visit by Bruce Fuhrer looking for fungi and Skullduggery at Skemps and in July, David Maynard spoke on the thylacine and his book about this subject launched at QVMAG. Skemps Planet Ark native tree day.

August was busy, Leigh Walters Tasmanian Land Conservancy spoke to us and we had trip to Maria Island and the north west coast.

September Dr Tanya Bailey spoke about replanting in the midlands, outing to Marion's garden at Legana and water monitoring at Skemps."

**Election of Office Bearers:** - With no nominations being lodged prior to the AGM with the Secretary, the following nominations were accepted from the floor and with no further nominees, they were declared elected.

President - Tom Treloggen

Vice President - Judith Handler

Treasurer - Karen Manning

Secretary - Noel Manning

Committee Members - Jill Campbell, Tina McGlynn, Peter Warren,  
Prue Wright, Tony Geeves, Peter Ralph

It was resolved that members subscriptions would remain the same as last years - Juniors \$5.00, Single \$30.00, Family \$40.00, Associate Groups \$45.00.

## FIELD TRIP - Badger Head to Copper Cove - Sunday 12 October

A small group of people met at the Inveresk carpark to make the journey to the Exeter Hotel to meet up with members living closer to today's destination. There was a slight breeze and the sky was overcast, however 11 of us pressed forward to see how the headland had changed in the year since our last visit. Prue carpooled with our guests Eddie and Joy Dell, naturalists from Western Australia, to make sure they arrived at Badger Head. It was great having the Dells join us. They were in Tasmania to do some sightseeing prior to attending the Australian Naturalists Network get-together in Hobart the following weekend.

At Badger Head the first thing we noticed on our walk up the hill behind the carpark, was that where there had been blackened ground last year, there was now *Lasiopetalum baueri*, slender velvetbush and *Solanum laciniatum*, kangaroo apple growing everywhere, quite a picture. Prue noticed a white flower growing amongst the blue flowers of the kangaroo apple and went to investigate but soon backed off when she met a snake surfing through the branches of one of the plants. Binoculars were used for a closer look which confirmed that the white flower was that of the kangaroo apple.

Up on the flat of the hill there were literally hundreds of small eucalypt trees growing amongst the dead *Allocasaurina*, unfortunately, there is insufficient space for them all to survive. Wanting to get to Copper Cove this trip, we decided to move fairly quickly to cover the distance noting species as we went. However, we couldn't help stopping to admire and take photographs of the open areas which were now a picture with low lying plants in flower such *Kennedia prostrata*, running postman, *Bossiaea prostrata*, creeping bossia; *Comesperma volubile*, blue lovecreeper and *Goodenia lanata*, trailing native-primrose covering the once blackened area. We noticed that there were less *Xanthorrhoea australis*, southern grasstrees, in flower than last year, many having appeared to have died off since our last visit.

Four members of the group continued into Copper Cove and while eating lunch saw *Haematopus longirostris*, pied oystercatchers, *Larus novaehollandiae*, silver gulls and *L. pacificus*, pacific gulls on the beach. The remaining members lunched on the nearest headland short of the cove. The day was still cool as was the breeze from the water and with the clouds darkening, they headed back up to the headland to catch up with the others who had already commenced the return journey.

We had been promised lots of orchids by Roy who had been on this walk earlier in the week. We were not disappointed, the large blue flowers of the *Glossodia major*, waxlip orchids were seen all along the walk, as were the pink of the *Caladenia fuscata* and pink and white flowers of the *C. carnea*. Sadly the flowers of the yellow *Thelymitra antennifera* and pink of *T. rubra* sun-orchids were closed due to the lack of sun.

Back at the carpark, while waiting for a member still out photographing, we had a coffee and chat before heading home. We were pleased with the amount of species recorded, some of which we hadn't seen during our visit in 2013 and to see regrowth in the parched landscape we had seen the previous year.

Karen Manning

The following we recorded during this trip:

**Flora:-** *Acacia myrtifolia*, redstem wattle; *A. suaveolens*, sweet wattle; *A. terminalis*, sunshine wattle; *A. verticillata* subsp *verticillata*, prickly moses; *Acaena novae-zelandiae*, common buzzy; *Adiantum aethiopicum*, common maidenhair; *Allocasuarina littoralis*, black sheoak; *A. monilifera*, necklace sheoak; *A. verticillata*, drooping sheoak; *Amperea xiphioclada*, broom spurge; *Aotus ericoides*, golden pea; *Balaskion* sp., restio; *Banksia marginata*, silver banksia; *Billardiera mutabilis*, appleberry; *Blechnum minus*, soft water fern; *Bossiaea prostrata*, creeping bossia; *Bursaria spinosa*, prickly box; *Carex* sp., sedge; *Carpobrotus rossii*, native pigface; *Cassytha glabella*, slender dodderlaurel; *Comesperma volubile*, blue love-creeper; *Dianella revoluta*, spreading flaxlily; *Dillwynia glaberrima*, smooth parrot-pea; *Drosera binata*, forked sundew; *D. auriculata*, tall sundew; *D. pygmaea*, dwarf sundew; *Epacris impressa*, common heath (white and pinks); *E. lanuginosa*, swamp heath; *Eucalypt* sp., gum; *Gahnia grandis*, cutting grass; *Gleichenia microphylla*, scrambling coral fern; *Gompholobium huegelii*, common wedgepea; *Gonocarpus micranthus*, creeping raspwort; *G. tetragynus*, common raspwort; *G. teucrioides*, forest raspwort; *Goodenia lanata*, trailing native-primrose; *G. ovata*, hop native-primrose; *Goodia lotifolia*, smooth goldentip; *Hakea teretifolia* subsp *hirsuta*, dagger needlebush; *Hibbertia procumbens*, spreading guinea-flower; *H. prostrata*, prostrate guineaflower; *H. riparia*, erect guineaflower; *Indigofera australis*, native indigo; *Kennedia prostrata*, running postman; *Lasiopetalum baueri*, slender velvet-bush; *Lepidosperma concavum*, sedge; *Leptocarpus tenax*, slender twinerush; *Leptospermum scoparium*, common teatree; *Leucopogon australis*, spike beard-heath; *L. ericoides*, pink beardheath; *L. parviflorus*, coast beardheath; *L. virgatus*, twiggy beardheath; *Lomandra longifolia*, sagg; *Lomatia tinctoria*, guitarplant; *Marchantia* sp., liverwort with gemmae cups; *Melaleuca ericifolia*, coast paperbark; *M. squarrosa*, scented paperbark; *Monotoca elliptica*, tree broomheath; *Patersonia fragilis*, short purpleflag; *Persoonia juniperina* sp., geebung; *Pimelea humilis*, dwarf riceflower; *Platylobium triangulare*, ivy flat pea; *Pomaderris elliptica*, yellow dogwood; *P. oraria*, bassian dogwood; *Pteridium esculentum*, bracken; *Pultenaea daphnoides*, heartleaf bushpea; *P. juniperina*, prickly beauty; *Senecio* sp., groundsel or fireweed; *Solanum laciniatum*, kangaroo apple (blue and white flowers); *Stackhousia monogyna*, forest candles; *Tetragonia implexicomia*, bower spinach; *Tetratheca pilosa* sp., hairy pinkbells; *Thysanotus pater-sonii*, twining fringelily; *Viola hederacea* subsp *hederacea*, ivyleaf violet; *Wahlenbergia stricta*, tall bluebell; *Xanthorrhoea australis*, southern grasstree; *Xanthosia pilosa*, woolly crossherb; *Xyris marginata*, alpine yelloweye.

**Orchids:-** *Acianthus caudatus*, mayfly orchid; *Caladenia fuscata*, white and pink versions; *C. carnea*, pink fingers; *Calochilus* sp, bearded orchid; *Diuris* sp, broadlip; *D. orientis*, eastern wallflower diuris; *D. sulphurea*, tiger orchid; *Glossodia major*, waxlip orchid; *Pterostylis tasmanica*, small bearded greenhood; *Pyrorchis nigricans* (leaves only), fire orchid; *Thelymitra antennifera*, rabbit-ears (yellow sun-orchid); *T. rubra*, pink sun-orchid

**Fungi:-** *Coltricia cinnamomea* polypore; *Laccaria* ssp.; *Lichenomphalia umbellifera*; *Lycoperdon scabrum*, puffball.

**Butterfly:-** *Vanessa kershawi*, Australian painted ladies.

**Birds:-** *Acanthiza pusilla*, brown thornbill; *Aquila audux*, wedge-tailed eagle; *Calyptorhynchus funereus*, yellow-tailed black-cockatoo; *Colluricincla harmonica*, grey shrike-thrush; *Gallinula mortierii*, Tasmanian native-hen; *Haematopus longirostris*, pied oystercatcher; *Haliaeetus leucogaster*, white-bellied sea-eagle; *Larus novae-hollandiae*, silver gull; *L. pacificus*, pacific gull; *Pachycephala olivacea*, olive whistler; *Sericornis humilis*, Tasmanian scrubwren.

**Mammals:-** *Macropus rufogriseus*, Bennett's wallaby.

**Reptiles:-** *Tympanocryptis diemensis*, mountain dragon; Snake

## AUSTRALIAN NATURALISTS NETWORK - Hobart - 18 to 26 October

John, Noel and I travelled to Hobart to attend this biennial get-together hosted by the Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club (TFNC) based at The Lea, a scout camp south of Hobart. Participants stayed in a variety of accommodation types and also stayed privately. The fee paid for the event covered all meals, bus trips and entrance fees to excursion venues; accommodation was paid separately. We shared a 6 berth self-contained cabin which was very comfortable.

Naturalist club members attending from around Australia were welcomed by Kevin Bonham, President of TFNC prior to the first evening meal which was followed by a talk by Keith Corbett, 'The geological background to the landscapes and ecology of Tasmania'.

Each evening we were given details of our field trips with weather information so we could dress appropriately. TFNC member were on duty at The Lea each night to deal with problems and others were on our buses as guides for the field trips.

Our first excursion on Sunday was to the Tasmanian Bushland Garden at Buckland, where we were told the history of the site and escorted around the individual garden beds by Keith and Sib Corbett. We then had the choice of walking around the property on various tracks or spending more time in the gardens. We bought seven plants from the nursery next door and even someone from interstate bought plants. I would love to know if they were able to get them home.

The day was very overcast but not cold, and following this visit we went to Calvert's Lagoon south of Sandford where we saw many orchids. The rain then set in, so back to the buses and we returned to our base. The evening lectures were by Phil Collier who spoke on 'Adaptive management to benefit natural values in northern Tasmania' and Mark Wapstra whose talk was 'Using fairy lanterns to light the forest floor: *Thismia rodwayi* in Tasmania'. We were shown a fairy lantern and advised to look for them in leaf litter under *Pomaderris* and *Eucalyptus* trees in the Styx the next day as although they hadn't been found there previously, there was no reason for them

not to be there.

Monday we travelled to the Styx River for a short walk out and along the river and later the Tall Trees walk. There was a lot of interesting fungus along each walk, *Cyttaria gunnii*, beech orange fungi was very memorable. Following lunch we travelled back to the Mt Field National Park to walk to the Russell Falls where again there was lots of fungus, a *Morchella elata*, was seen on the return walk. The visitors centre had an interesting interpretation area. I'm not sure whether anyone looked for the *Thismia* at the Styx, but some time was spent looking for it at Mt Field, it remained elusive.

The evening talks were by Mike Driessen, '*What's special about Tassie's fauna?*' and Eric Woehler, '*Status and trends of Tasmania's resident shorebirds*'.

Tuesday was an early start, departing at 7.30am to catch the first ferry to Bruny Island. While we waited in the queue for the ferry we enjoyed an early morning walk along the Trial Bay foreshore, not sure what the locals thought when they saw 90 or so people walking along the foreshore early in the morning. Both buses managed to get on the same ferry, our bus headed for Adventure Bay where we walked along the beach to a track that followed the coastline to Grass Point, which was mainly lined with *Allocasuarina* and grasses. At the Point, the tide was fairly low so many people rock hopped over to Penguin Island for a brief look or studied the amazing sea stars, seaweeds and bubble anemones in among the rocks. The return walk took an hour after which we bussed down to the Community Centre where there were toilets and across the road, tables and chairs, or a place on the grass to have lunch. All fed and happy, we travelled back to The Neck and climbed the staircase to a platform lookout on top of the sand dunes, the view was magnificent. We also had the opportunity to walk out to the beaches on either side of the neck or reading the interesting information boards which talked about the pelicans that roost in the area and the other birdlife.

The evening talks were by Roz Hart and Jolanda Keeble (West Australia naturalists (WA Nats)) '*The incredible biodiversity of Kwongan, the northern sandplains area of Western Australia*', Alice Springs FNC '*A Northern Territory cattle station – three years respite*' and Jeff Campbell (Stanthorpe FNC Qld), '*Stanthorpe, the Granite Belt and Field Nats*'.

Wednesday was our trip to the Tasman Peninsular, visiting the Eaglehawk Neck area to see the Devils Kitchen and Tasman Arch and walk the tracks along this rocky coastline. We lunched at the Eaglehawk Neck Hall and then enjoyed looking at the sea life in the rockpools on the Tessellated Pavements and the interesting rock formations which give the area its name.

Evening talks, Genevieve Gates introduced Sarah Lloyd and told us of her work with slime moulds before launching Sarah's new book titled '*Where slime mould creeps the fascinating world of myxomycetes*'. Sarah then spoke about slime moulds illustrated by pictures from the book. This was followed by Roz Hart, President of the WA Field Naturalists, who gave details about their ideas for the next ANN get-together in 2016. This event would be hosted by Western Australia and she invited everyone to attend. The next speaker was Joan Breakey, Queensland FNC, whose talk was '*Plants that cause adverse symptoms in people*'.

Thursday we travelled to the Hartz Mountains to walk in alpine flora, options

were to either Lake Osborne or to Ladies Tarn. The weather was predicted to be very cold, but on the day was sunny and warm, perfect for sitting on the lakes edge to eat lunch, listening to the birds and the frogs. We visited the Forest Heritage Centre in Geeveston on the return trip.

Our evening speaker was Lisa Cawthen who spoke on '*Unlocking the secret world of Tasmanian bats*' which was followed by a night excursion around 'The Lea' in light rain for a bat survey. Although no bats were seen, the sonic equipment that Lisa had with her indicated 30 or more bats present in the area.

Friday we travelled to Bonorong Park, a native animal sanctuary, where we heard about the Tasmanian Devil Breeding program and then given a tour of the park meeting animals that were undergoing rehabilitation to be returned to the wild or seeing animals that, due to disabilities, will not return to the wild as they would be easy prey. We lunched there prior to returning to the bus to travel back into Hobart to visit the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery to the '*Islands to Ice*' exhibition and then visited Mawson's Hut.

This evening's speaker was Simon Grove who gave a talk '*Between Tasmanian tidelines*' which was of great interest as our excursion the next day would focus on the tideline.

Saturday we travelled to Marion Bay where we walked along Sandspit Beach Reserve prior to lunch and later walked into the inner lagoon to see the birds and the seaweeds, shells and crabs in the tideline.

Our evening talk was by Kevin Bonham, on a rather boring topic he said, but we received a very interesting and energetic presentation under the title '*On the trail of Tasmania's snails*' interspersed with his often self-deprecating humour.

Today, Sunday was to be our last day of excursions and talks. Mt Wellington was our destination, from the Springs to the summit. Unfortunately for visitors to the State, the fog was down to river level and we couldn't see very far ahead of ourselves. Our bus travelled up to the summit first, stopping at The Chalet we were taken by our guides Don Hird and Mark Hovenden to a small pond where we were shown the Tasmanian Mountain Shrimp, *Anaspides Tasmaniae* which had been discovered in 1893 by a visiting New Zealand naturalist. The fog has turned into rain so back on the bus to the top. Mark tells us about the mountain ecology on the way up to the summit and how the snow gums become shrub size at a particular level on the mountain and then disappear altogether. We walked to a viewing platform where we were told the different methods plants use to survive the extreme cold. We then walked freely in the alpine flora not wandering too far in the fog, prior to returning to the bus and relocating to The Springs, where we had lunch in a hut heated by an open fire. We then walked to Sphinx Rock in the rain and mist, finding many interesting plants to photograph along the way, including the lovely *Richea dracophylla*. We travelled back to The Lea via the Cascade Brewery for a brief look at the old buildings.

Our last evening meal was a very noisy and social occasion. It was great to sit and catch up with Lisa-ann Gershwin who gave the evening talk '*Stung! On jellyfish blooms and the future of the ocean*', before Kevin Bonham gave the closing speech.

ANN 2014 was very enjoyable, the excursions and talks were varied, and on topics that would interest any field naturalist. Congratulations to the Hobart com-

mitee who organised this wonderful event. We look forward to travelling to Western Australia in 2016.

Karen Manning



***Richea dracophylla*,  
pineapple candleheath**

**NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING ~ GUEST SPEAKER ~ Jane Elek**  
***Rockpools: windows to the animal kingdom***

For the meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November, Dr Jane Elek presented a pictorial review of invertebrate animals which inhabit intertidal rock pools and platforms in Tasmania.

The Animal Kingdom is classified into a series of groups, beginning with Phylum. Generally the animals placed with a Phylum share a similar body form. By using a “Tree of Animal Life” diagram, Jane showed that marine animals represent many more Phyla than those found among animals on land.

Plants were not left out because they form the basis of the residents’ food chain. A photo of brown, green and coralline red algae, together in a rock pool, was included in the introduction. Reports on selected Phyla followed.

Phylum Porifera. The most primitive multicellular animals are sponges. Theoretically a sponge resembles a vase with many small holes in its wall and a larger aperture at its top. A water current is drawn in through the small holes and pumped out through the larger one. Carrying food material on its way. For most sponges the reality is more complex.

Some Porifera have a recognisable shape like the golfball sponge, *Tethya* sp. The appearance of others differs according to local conditions. Where water movement is strong a sponge will remain low and encrusting, while in calm water the same species will grow higher. Classification is based on internal features.

Phylum Cnidaria. In this Phylum the body cells are better organised than those of Porifera. In Cnidaria they form two distinct layers around a central cavity, with one exterior aperture.

Sea anemones are the most familiar examples found in rock pools and clinging to intertidal rocks. Some anemones are solitary, like the large bubble anemone, *Phlyctenanthus australis*, while others congregate in colonies.

Cnidaria possess stinging cells which are fired into potential prey to immobilise it. Flexible tentacles then transfer captured small animals to the mouth. Indigestible remains are expelled from there later. Corals and jellyfish are other members of the Cnidaria.

Phylum Arthropoda. The next group which Jane introduced is much higher in the sequence of invertebrate Phyla. Its members are characterised by a hard exo-skeleton and jointed legs. Most of its rock pool inhabitants belong to Sub-Phylum Crustacea.

The common name, “crab”, applies to two related kinds. True crabs [Brachyura] have five pairs of legs visible (pincer claws included). The notched shore crab, *Paragrapsus quadridentatus*, is one of several Tasmanian intertidal species.

Those of the related kind [Anomura] are more diverse. A hermit crab, *Strigopagurus strigimanus*, must borrow an empty mollusc shell to protect its thin-walled abdomen. The “half-crab”, *Petrolisthes elongatus*, is one of a few New Zealand invertebrate species which were introduced accidentally to Tasmania several decades ago when Bluff oysters were imported here, packed in damp seaweed. It is now widespread.

Brachyuran crabs use their pincer claws to seize and manipulate solid food. *P. elongatus* is a filter-feeder. It traps small, floating food items in the long setae on appendages near its mouth.

The Shore Slater, *Ligia australiensis*, lives near high tide level on rocky shores where it eats stranded seaweed. However, it is not afraid to walk through water which gets in its way.

In contrast to fast-moving crabs and slaters, adult barnacles are sessile. Their free-swimming larvae settle on rocks where they remain fixed. In an adult calcareous plates form a strong case which protects the softer parts inside. When valves are opened setose legs are extended to filter-feed.

Barnacle species select where they settle. Some species form distinctive zones on a rocky shore. With surf barnacles, *Catomerus polymerus*, and high tide barnacles, *Chthamalus antennatus*, their common names are self-explanatory.

Phylum Mollusca. The variety of molluscs which inhabit rock pools and intertidal platforms is large. They differ considerably in appearance but a basic body pattern includes a head and a muscular foot. Many molluscs have protective shells.

In a chiton (coat-of-mail shell), eight dorsal plates overlap to form a flexible shell. The serpent chiton, *Sypharochiton pelliserpentus*, is a conspicuous example.

Among univalve molluscs the shell may be simple and flat, as in the elephant

snail, *Scutus antipodes*, or domed, like that of the orange-edged limpet, *Cellana solida*. Many marine snails have their shells spirally twisted.

Chitons and univalve molluscs use a narrow toothed structure, a radula, to rasp food into the mouth.

Bivalve molluscs have a two-part shell, hinged dorsally. Like the crustacean barnacles, adult mussels are sessile and they filter-feed. They too may form definite zones on a rocky shore. Beaked mussels, *Austromytilus rostratus*, are small, intertidal examples of bivalves.

Also present on rocky shores in Tasmania is the blue-ringed octopus, *Hapalochlaena maculosa*. Its bite is highly venomous. This carries a warning. Do not put hands into places who contents cannot be seen!

Phylum Bryozoa. Called “moss animals”, these small, colonial animals superficially resemble some colonial Cnidaria. Like those each zooid has tentacles around the mouth. However, the internal structure of the body is more sophisticated than that of Cnidaria.

Net-like skeletons of bryozoan lace corals, *Triphyllozoon moniliferum*, sometimes wash ashore into rock pools.

Phylum Echinodermata. Members of this Phylum have bodies based on radial symmetry, unlike the bilateral symmetry of so many other animals. Sea stars are common residents of rock pools. In shape they vary from a five-pointed biscuit star, *Tosia australis*, to the large eleven-armed *Coscinasterias muricata*. Brittle stars, sea urchins and sea cucumbers also inhabit rock pools.

Echinoderms have a skeleton made up of plates and spines under the skin. Most use tube feet, small fluid-filled structures, as a means of moving around. Dietary habits vary within this group.

Phylum Tunicata. This Phylum includes sea-squirts which feed by drawing water in through the mouth, filtering out food particles and then ejecting the water through the anus.

An adult sea-squirt is fixed to a surface but the free-swimming larva has characters which link it to Phylum Chordata; i.e. it is a more complex animal than the adult appearance implies.

Some tunicates are single, eg *Pyura gibbosa*, a “sea tulip”, but many of them form colonies.

With her excellent photographs and supporting comments, Jane introduced a well chosen selection of the many and diverse kinds of invertebrates which live in the intertidal zone of rocky shores in Tasmania.

In addition to the Phyla included here several more are represented in this habitat, eg those which include marine worms.

Our thanks to Dr Jan Elek for her highlighting of what best to look out for among the varied invertebrate fauna of Tasmania’s rocky shores. Alison Green

**FEDERATION OF FIELD NATURALISTS ~ 7 to 9 November ~ hosted by  
Burnie Field Naturalists Club**

Six members from the Launceston FNC attended the weekend of activities hosted

by the Burnie FNC. On the Friday night we met at a barn attached to the Two Oaks café in Somerset for a BBQ, members of the Burnie club provided delicious salads and desserts for us to enjoy. The interesting talk and associated slide show by David Cooper was on the geology of the area. His slides showed examples of geological disturbances between Devonport and the Table Cape area. David told us that we would visit two of these areas tomorrow bright and early so as to beat the tide. Before we left that evening we were given a package of information on both the Burnie and Wynyard areas.

Next morning we met at David's beachside home in Wynyard for a look at the rock platform at low tide the various layers of hard and soft rock. We saw what looked like "fossilised trees" in the mud flows on the platform and there were erratic boulders located higher on the beach which contained small seashells and smaller rocks, deposited following glacier melting.

From here we travelled a little further along the coast to Fossil Bluff where we saw an example of the different layers deposited over millions of years including fossil rich sandstone sitting on a layer of tillite. The beach was littered with many large boulders that had dislodged from the cliff face. We walked along the beach to the left of the Bluff where we were able to look closer at boulders in safety. The boulders contained both large and small shells. Our next destination was to a viewing point in a new housing estate above the beach. We could see as far as Rocky Cape to the left and not sure about the right as the area was in mist, but a great view.

Morning tea was back at David's home, where we were provided with a lovely range of cakes and slices, before heading off to Sister's Beach to look for native orchids with local expert, Barry Dudman and other Burnie members. The strip of land on which we looked had lots of *Caladenia carnea*, pink fingers, *Thelymitra ixioides*, spotted sun-orchid and a few *Calochilus paludosus*, strap beard-orchid. We admired the cones of the *Banksia serrata*, saw banksia; and flowers of *Hibbertia procumbens*, spreading guineaflower and *Calytrix tetragona*, common fringemyrtle.

We lunched at the picnic area near the beach and then drove to the far end of Sister's Beach to explore further. Walking along the pebbled beach, we took a walking track that gradually climbed a hill which gave great views over the beach. We all visited the Wet Cave unfortunately no torch was available to view it better, but it did have a big pool of water in it, Burnie members saying they had seen the water a lot higher and also lower. Above this point we were on the Banksia Grove Circuit where we walked among *Banksia serrata*, *Pomaderris elliptica*, *Olearia lirata* and *Acacia terminalis* trees to name a few. Barry told us about an uncontrolled fire which had come through in 1998 from Rocky Cape and devastated this area. On top of the ridge we went out on a track on our right to take in the view further along the coast to Rocky Cape. Closest to us was Anniversary Point where the water in the bay looked very inviting. Back on the ridge track we finished our walk and returned to our vehicles.

That evening we dined at the Beijing Chinese Restaurant in Somerset. As the restaurant was busy our meals took a while to arrive allowing those in attendance to chat amiably. Eventually though the conversations turned to complaints about the wait and how hungry we were.

Sunday morning we met Burnie members at the Flowerdale turnoff and were

escorted to the Lobster Ponds to view the giant freshwater crayfish, *Astacopsis gunnii*. Our guide Trevor talked about the history of the establishment and told us many interesting facts about the crayfish. Although the crayfish tend to come out at night only, we were able to see some in the ponds. We had a late morning tea in the tearooms which overlooked the valley of farms.

We travelled to Heybridge and had lunch in the garden of the home of Margaret Kinsey. Margaret's garden had developed over 60 years and was a real picture. On arrival we saw from the road a rather impressive tree with white flowers. Margaret told us it was a *Eucalyptus risdonii*, Risdon peppermint, grown from seed she collected in Tasmania's south. The garden contained Australian natives including many varieties of individual species.

We chatted for some time after lunch about places to go and things to see in the area. We thoroughly enjoyed the weekend, thank you to the wonderful band of Burnie member who organised the activities and escorted us over the two days, we appreciated your time and effort.

Karen Manning



**David Cooper points out marking in the mud flow that look like a fossilised tree**

### **FIELD TRIP ~ Native orchids at Henry Somerset Conservation Area ~ Sunday 16 November**

Seven members and two visitors met with Peter Tonelli at the Henry Somerset Conservation Area (HSCA) on a sunny Sunday morning. Peter started by telling us that he became interested in orchids in 1965 firstly from a photographic point of

view. His reference at this time was John Firth's *Native Orchids of Tasmania*, where Firth referred to finding orchids in the Railton Hills. Peter lived reasonably close to Railton so he started looking in areas along the highway and found orchids in what is now the HSCA. When he was asked to show his photographs to the Devonport Orchid Society he decided that he needed to name the individual plants and this is when his journey into the classification of native orchids. Peter also told us that he took Winifred Curtis to the area so she could collect live material for her research when writing *The Student's Flora of Tasmania Part 4a Angiospermae: Orchidaceae*.

When Winifred heard in later years that the land was to be cleared, she spoke to Sir Henry Somerset who requested that Peter do a report to hopefully stop the clearing of this native forest. Due to the diversity of the native orchids, 53 species have been noted in the reserve, Peter's submission was successful and the area was recognised as a "Site of Special Scientific Interest" (SSSI). Other examples of SSSI are the Tom Gibson Reserve, Hawley Nature Reserve, Winifred Curtis Reserve and the Peter Murrell Reserve. The HSCA is about 200 metres deep and covers 85 hectares along the Railton Road and the custodians are the Devonport Orchid Society. There are both a management plan and a fire management plan in place, and fire breaks have been made around the property. There are other active bodies showing interest in the reserve such as the Threatened Species Unit of the DPIPWE, who monitor species on the threatened species list. Peter showed places where orchids are monitored to check on their progress. Like many remote forests, there are problems with people dumping rubbish and stealing wood which Peter described as 'wood hooking'.

Peter took us to a part of the forest where he would usually expect to find many orchids. Due to a recent burn and a poor season we were disappointed in our search for orchids. We did locate *Caladenia tonellii*, which Peter told us can have 2 to 4 flowers on a stalk, *Calochilus platyichilus*, purple beard orchid and *C. paludosus*, strap beard-orchid. Peter was hoping to find a particular white orchid but unfortunately we were disappointed. Walking back through the bush to the fire break, Tony noticed a snake curled up in the hollow in the base of a tree, but photographs in the dark hole were not good enough for an identification.

Back at the car park Peter bid us farewell and we had an early lunch then headed off on the circuit walk to explore the rest of the reserve. John located *Chiloglottis* orchid leaves, *Dipodium roseum*, rosy hyacinth-orchid it's flower not yet open, *Thelymitra aristata*, great sun-orchid and *T. juncifolia*, large spotted sun-orchid, during the walk.

We headed back to Launceston around 2.30pm stopping at the Villarett Gardens at Moltema for an early afternoon tea. We all agreed that our sweet treats were delicious and the homemade ginger beer a winner. Before heading home we took a walk around the gardens. They were impressive with a couple of large ponds covered in lilies, many interesting artworks, and the plants, although not native, were growing very well and the flowers colourful and large. The arched bridge entwined with wisteria would be a real picture in full bloom.

Noel & Karen Manning

The following was recorded during this trip:

**Flora:-** *Acacia melanoxylon*, blackwood; *A. terminalis*, sunshine wattle; *A. verticillata* sp, prickly moses; *Acaena novae-zelandiae*, common buzzy; *Allocasuarina* sp, sheoak; *Arthropodium strictum*, chocolate lily; *Astroloma humifusum*; native cranberry; *Banksia marginata*, silver banksia; *Billardiera mutabilis*, green appleberry; *Brunonia australis*, blue pincushion; *Cassinia aculeata*, dollybush; *Cassytha melantha*, large dodderlaurel; *Chiloglottis* sp, leaves only; *Clematis gentianoides*, ground clematis; *Comesperma volubile*, blue lovecreeper; ? *Coronidium scorpioides*, curling everlasting; *Cyathodes glauca*, purple cheeseberry; *Daviesia latifolia*, hop bitterpea; *Dianella revoluta* var *revoluta*, spreading flaxlily; *Dillwynia cinerascens*, grey parrotpea; *Diplarrena moraea*, white flag-iris; *Drosera auriculata*, tall sundew; *Epacris impressa*, common heath; *Eucalyptus amygdalina*, black peppermint; *E. obliqua*, stingybark; *Exocarpos cupressiformis*, common native-cherry; *Goodenia lanata*, trailing native-primrose; *Hypericum gramineum*, small St Johns-wort; *Kennedia prostrata*, running postman; *Lepidosperma* sp, swordsedg; *Leptomeria drupacea*, erect currantbush; *Leptospermum* sp, teatree; *Linum marginale*, native flax; *Lomandra longifolia*, sagg; *Lomatia tinctoria*, guitarplant; *Melaleuca ericifolia*, coast paperbark; *M. squarrosa*, scented paperbark; *Olearia lirata*, forest daisybush; *Oxalis perennans*, grassland woodsorrel; *Patersonia fragilis*, short purpleflag; *P. occidentalis*, long purpleflag; *Pelargonium australe*, southern storksbill; *Persoonia juniperina*, prickly geebung; *Pimelea humilis*, dwarf riceflower; *Pomaderris* sp, dogwood; *Pultenaea juniperina*, prickly beauty; *Stackhousia monogyne*, forest candles; *Tetradheca procumbens*, spreading pinkbells; *Thysanotus patersonii*, twining fringelily; *Viola hederacea*, ivyleaf violet.

**Orchids:-** *Caladenia tonellii*, robust fingers; *Calochilus paludosus*, strap beard orchid; *C. platychilus*, purple beard orchid; *Dipodium roseum*, rosy hyacinth-orchid; *Thelymitra aristata*, great sun-orchid; *T. juncifolia*, large spotted sun-orchid.

**Miscellaneous:-** *Malurus cyaneus*, superb fairy-wren (male), snake, skink and dragonfly

### FIELD TRIP ~ 'Kingston' plant survey ~ 3 November

Prue Wright reported that a few members are continuing with the LFNC survey at 'Kingston' and the plant list continues to grow.

Of particular note recently they have added threatened species *Leucopogon fraseri*, prickly beardheath; *Pterostylis ziegelerei*, Cape Portland greenhood and there were masses of *Pultenaea prostrata*, silky bushpea.

## **SKEMPS DAY ~ QVMAG Bug Day Out ~ Sunday 30 November**

The Club made the Skemp property available to QVMAG staff for their final Bug Day Out for 2014. Members arrived early to set up the barbecue, tables and chairs, and took a short walk before heading back to the Centre to assist QVMAG staff set up their gear later in the morning.

As we were providing a sausage sizzle for everyone attending, the barbecue was lit early and we enjoyed a snag in bread with onion and coleslaw before the children and their parents started to arrive around 1 pm.

Many of the families enjoyed a snag before they got involved in the activities, which included making and flying kits, looking for bugs armed with collection jars, tweezers and a magnifying glass, and taking walks on the nature trails. QVMAG staff also took small groups to search for bugs. Items collected were then placed under a large magnifier and identified with the help of Craig or Simon.

The first walk had just started when a child was stung on both heels by inchman ants. Back at the Centre Peter Ralph broke open a bracken stem and applied the sap to the small welts. We understand this quickly relieved the pain.



The children were queued up to have Jennifer paint an insect on their arm or hand, they were very well done and often a child queued a second time round. We saw many butterflies, spiders, ants, scorpions and cicadas.

A life sized Thylacine was hidden in the bush behind the Centre and many children had their photo taken with it.

From the sideline, the families appeared to enjoy their time and many were still at the property after the expected finishing time. There were a few tantrums when children didn't want to go home.

Around 4 pm we had afternoon tea with QVMAG staff and sang happy birthday to Tony who cut a chocolate cake made for the occasion.

A big thank you to the wonderful members who helped out on the day, especially Shirley who took on the job of cutting up the large bag of onions for the BBQ.

We also had a visit from Linda who came to say goodbye as she is moving back to Melbourne early next year, we wished her well. Noel & Karen Manning

## **REMINDER - MEMBER VISITS TO SKEMPS**

Just a reminder to members that if they go out to Skemps on days other than those on the program, that they should inform the bookings manager. This includes even to take a walk or take photographs. Also when visiting on those days, please keep the boom gate clear as other properties are accessed by this roadway.

## **FIELD TRIP ~ Ben Lomond National Park ~ Friday 16 to Sunday 18 January 2015**

Members are invited to attend this two day field trip to Ben Lomond National Park where we will be staying at the Borrowdale Ski Chalet.

This is a very interesting place to visit with many walks varying in length and difficulty, great photographic opportunities of an unusual terrain and the wildflowers will hopefully be looking good at this that of year. If an overnight stay is not for you, come for the day and explore this wonderful area.

Please contact Peter Warren on 6339 2671 if you would like to reserve a bed. You will need to bring a sleeping bag or sheets and blankets, pillows and enough food and drink for your stay, the closest shop is approximately 50 kilometres away.

A day visit will cost each person \$4.00. The cost for staying overnight will be \$16.00 per person per day. The temperature and weather can change quite quickly, so be prepared for all types of weather and don't forget your camera.

As this visit is to a national park, all cars need to display a current Parks Pass.

## **FIELD TRIP ~ Vale of Belvoir Conservation Area ~ Sunday 25 January 2015**

Members are invited to join Australian Plant Society members on a visit to the Vale of Belvoir in January. Managed by the Tasmanian Land Conservancy, this reserve is near Cradle Mountain.

Expressions of interest in attending should be made to Roy Skabo on 6334 6787 or [rlskabo@gmail.com](mailto:rlskabo@gmail.com) who will provide you with further details closer to the date.

## **Additional Information**

### **Club Outings:**

1. All outings depart from Inveresk carpark (near Museum entrance) at 9 am unless otherwise specified. Internet site updated regularly to reflect short notice changes. Saturday all-day parking cost is \$3.00. Sunday parking free.
2. You need to provide your own food and drinks for the outing unless otherwise specified. Morning tea is normally provided by the bus company on bus outings.
3. When travelling by car in convoy, each driver is responsible to ensure that the vehicle behind is in sight immediately after passing each cross road or fork in the road.
4. When car pooling, petrol costs should be shared between all the passengers, including family of the driver, and based on other clubs the Committee suggested \$11 per 100 km. This is a guideline only.

**Name Tags:** Name tags are to be worn at meetings and on outings.

**Tea/Coffee:** A levy of 50c is currently charged for supper provided at meetings.

**Field Centre:** All members have access to the John Skemp Field Centre. Contact our booking manager, John Elliott on 6344 9303 or [skempbookings@yahoo.com.au](mailto:skempbookings@yahoo.com.au) regarding availability and keys.

**Field Centre Phone Number** - 6399 3361

**Postal Address:** PO Box 1072 Launceston 7250

**Internet site :** <http://www.lfnc.org.au>

**E.mail :** [secretary@lfnc.org.au](mailto:secretary@lfnc.org.au)