

THE FIELD NATURALIST

NEWSLETTER NO. 119: August, 2014.



ALBURY-WODONGA FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB INC.
Reg. No. A0023416K

PROGRAMME: 9th AUGUST 2014 – 28th FEBRUARY 2015

August

Sat 9th

Corowa Sewage Ponds & Lake Moodemere

Meet 9:30 am, SS&A car park, Wilson St. Albury
BYO refreshments for the day.

Leader – David Coleman, ph: 6021 2022

***Tues 19th**

Nail Can Hill

Meet 1:00 pm, Range Rd, Lavington (Glenroy)
BYO afternoon tea.

Leader - Neil Blair, ph: 6021 2097

Sun 24th

Chiltern (Chiltern Mt Pilot Nat. Park)

Meet 9.30 am, Acacia Car Park Wodonga
BYO refreshments for the day.

Leader - Phillip Seely, ph: 6021 5313

September

***Tues 9th**

Penambra Nat Park, Table Top

Details TBC

Leaders - Neil Blair, ph: 6021 2097 &
Dave Pearce (Parks Ranger)

Sat 13th

Woomargama State Forest

Meet 9:00 am SS&A car park, Wilson St. Albury
BYO refreshments for the day.

Leader - Neil Blair, ph: 6021 2097

***Tues 23rd**

Warby Range State Park

Meet 9.00 am, 26 Murphy St. Wodonga
BYO refreshments for the day.

Leaders - Neil Blair, ph: 6021 2097 &
Patrick Ward

Sun 28th

Mt Pilot (Chiltern Mt Pilot Nat. Park)

Meet 9.30 am, Acacia Car Park Wodonga
BYO refreshments for the day.

Leader – Stephanie Jakovac, ph: 6023 6464

October

Sat 11th

Nail Can Hill & West Albury Wetlands

Meet 10:00 am Pemberton St. West Albury
BYO refreshments for the day.

Leader - Neil Blair, ph: 6021 2097

***Tues 21st**

Draper Lane & Boyes Rd, Leneva

Meet 1:00 pm, 26 Murphy St. Wodonga
BYO afternoon tea.

Leader – Dick Andrews, ph: 6056 4112

Sun 26th

Killawarra, Warby Range State Park

Meet 9.30 am, Acacia Car Park Wodonga
BYO refreshments for the day.

Leader - Phillip Seely, ph: 6021 5313

PRESIDENT
Neil Blair
(02) 6021 2097

VICE PRESIDENT
Robert Robinson
(02) 6024 2904

SECRETARY
Veronica Robertson
(02) 6021 2120

TREASURER
David Bird
(02) 6059 8452

NEWSLETTER
EDITOR
Gail Steed
(02) 6032 9874
ggadsteed@aapt.net.au

OTHER COMMITTEE:
Richard Andrews
David Coleman
Stephanie Jakovac
Phillip Seely

Email:
awfnci@yahoo.com.au

**ANNUAL
SUBSCRIPTIONS**
FAMILY - \$30.00
SINGLE - \$20.00
CONCESSION
\$15.00

By direct transfer or
sent to the Treasurer,
PO. Box 251, Albury,
2640
Make cheques payable
to: Albury-Wodonga
Field Naturalists' Club
Inc.

Contributions to this
newsletter are
welcome and should
be emailed as above,
or posted to the
Editor, PO Box 251,
Albury, 2640.

November

Sat 8th Mt Buffalo Nat. Park
Meet 9:00am, Acacia Car Park Wodonga
BYO refreshments for the day.
Leader - Neil Blair, ph: 6021 2097

Sun 23rd Pheasant Creek, near Shelley
Meet 9:00am, Acacia Car Park Wodonga
BYO refreshments for the day.
Leader – Glenda & Bernie Datsun, ph: 6020 8104

December

Sat 13th: Mt Big Ben & Yackandandah (Christmas breakup)
Meet 9.30 am, Acacia Car Park Wodonga
BYO refreshments for the day.
Leader - Neil Blair, ph: 6021 2097

2015

Jan 20-22nd: Viking Lodge Falls Creek
Details TBC.
Leader: Committee, ph: 6021 2120

February

Sat 14th: Wonga Wetlands, Albury (depending on weather)
Meet 4 pm Wonga Wetlands carpark
BYO light refreshments.
Leader – Committee, ph: 6021 2120

Friday 20th: AGM
7:00 pm, Age Concern Building. Townsend St, Albury
BYO supper to share.
Leader – Committee, ph: 6021 2120

Sat 28th: West Albury Wetlands
Meet 9:00 am Boat Ramp car park, Kremur St, West Albury
BYO morning tea.
Leader – Veronica Robertson, ph: 6021 2120

****Note the introduction of new, mid-week outings as an extra option for members.***

Please confirm outing details in Saturday’s Border Morning Mail and contact the outing leader in the week prior if you need a lift.

~~~~~

**Electronic Payments**

Payments to the club can be made electronically - details for those wishing to pay via Internet banking are:

**BSB:** 803 070

**Account No.** 61019

**Account Name:** ALB WOD FIELD NATURALISTS INC

*(Please note, the account name should be written in its abbreviated form as shown)*

~~~~~

And don’t forget the ‘Ecoportal’ – our and other club activities are all available at this site. Veronica maintains the group’s contact and activity details here.

<http://www.ecoportal.net.au/>

It’s an excellent source of community group information, events and sustainability articles from our broader region. You are almost certain to find something of interest!

Well, the 2014 weather hasn't been as favourable to the Field Nats as last year & a few outings were abandoned because of rain. And just to remind us that Nature calls the shots, even the Falls Creek trip which was chosen as a cool option in January, fell in a scorcher of a week. None the less, the group found plenty to see and enjoyed the get-away into alpine country – as seen in Peter Spencer's photos (next page).



(Brown?) Falcon



A classic Falls Creek vista



Australian Pipit



Quail



Neil's envy (can anyone explain?)



The group



Billy button & friends

A morning visit to the West Albury wetlands in March, found us (and many others) enjoying the beautiful autumn morning at the new boat ramp area. Most of the other visitors were being energetic so accordingly, few birds were seen near the car park but the water birds were as reliable as always. The bird count of 44 included the 'striped pyjama' duck (alias pink-eared) and a reed warbler. Photos again supplied by Peter. We very kindly waited for a smallish (1 m) red-bellied black snake to move across our path, and it was last sighted determinedly heading for cover...



Pelican



Sacred Kingfisher



Later that month, on another glorious day, we headed to the Corowa sewage ponds. Once we circumvented the fence we were presented with a wonderful array of waterbirds, particularly ducks.



With the benefit of patient, obliging experts (and the 'scope'), we were able to very clearly see Magpie Geese and just about the full duck set (with the exception of musk ducks) and including freckled ducks.

After a late lunch we wandered interstate a couple of kilometres down a shady track from McDonalds Rd, on the east side of Lake Moodemere. This runs within the reserve, alongside the water's edge to Distillery Rd. My personal highlights were actually seeing and learning something about ducks, a great sighting of many whistling kites, and a juvenile white-bellied sea eagle. Oh, and now I know the difference between a male & female mudlark – thank you Neil. 43 birds were seen at the ponds & 24 in the afternoon.

When rain didn't actually cancel our trip, the weather in the first half of the year was often beautiful. On such a day in April, Phillip took us into Green & Winton Swamps. The project for restoration of the wetlands, following the decommissioning of Lake Mokoan, is being managed by the Winton Wetlands Committee of Management. We enjoyed morning tea in a rather lovely, contemporary shelter – a part of the infrastructure associated with the Master Plan - although the water and associated wildlife were a long way off.

Numerous Whistling Kites and White-fronted Woodswallows presented themselves for Peter to photograph. An elusive grass bird and quail were sighted (but again, not by me!)



In May, a large group including Judith, Max and Nella from the Murrumbidgee Field Nats meandered around Cyanide Dam and the Honeyeater picnic ground in the Chiltern State Forest. The morning uncovered an array of fungi and in the afternoon, the site lived up to its name with at least 8 different honeyeaters sighted. A rose robin was called in by Bernie, close enough for Peter to 'capture'. Later, on Donchi Road, a further 15 birds were seen (40 in total for us for the day) and a yellow-footed antechinus was spotted hopping about amongst the litter and fallen timber.



Hairy Trumpets



Rooting Shank



Amanita xanthocephala?



Yellow-tufted Honeyeater



Rose Robin



Yellow-footed Antechinus



Autumn Greenhood



Brown-headed Honeyeater

In June, despite an overcast day, quite a few birds busied themselves elusively about us at Kentucky State Forest. We had some excellent sightings of flame and red-capped robins and I enjoyed watching the golden whistler. Again, fungi were plentiful (and they stand still) although it wasn't a great day for attempting photographs. It is an interesting area and it was also pleasing to see the *Lomandra* lives on. Thanks Phillip, a good decision to go ahead with the outing.



Burgundy Wood Tubaria



?????

Our most recent July outing took us through Talgarno to Magazine Track, Georges Creek area. Despite the fog preventing any views of Lake Hume on the way there, numerous small birds were extremely active. Peter did manage to photograph some over the day but as previously, fungi proved to be eye-catching and easy targets.



Yellow Brain



Unidentified bonnet fungus



Unidentified bracket fungus



Striated Thornbill



Varied Sitella



Nodding Greenhood

And finally, some more photos taken by Peter.



King Parrot, Yackandandah



Rainbow Bee-eaters, Lake Hume



Crimson Rosella, Yackandandah

[Ed Note: Where identified, I have included the information provided; where not, all errors are mine - happy to be informed & corrected!
If anyone has any information or articles they would like to share, please let me know or send as per details on front page]

In anticipation of the upcoming Nail Can Hill outing, I have included an article written by late member, May Pagenstecher (as kindly provided to Glenda & Bernie by her niece)

NAIL CAN HILL FLORA AND FAUNA RESERVE

The words above are printed on a notice fastened to the padlocked gate across the entrance to a reserve off Pemberton Street, Albury. Anyone viewing the area for the first time, may be excused for wondering why anyone would want to be bothered with it. It appears an unattractive, rough area of bushland rising steeply to the north. Stunted, scraggy Box and Stringybark trees predominate in the shallow rocky soil. The understorey is composed of low-growing Wattles with dead trees here and there, together with shrubbery, mostly in greyish-green tones, and rough tussocks of tall grass. The areas recently ravaged by fire have scanty ground cover, while trees are sprouting leaves along their blackened trunks. However, even in the depth of winter there may be a few early blooms of spiky Urn Heath and the golden Guinea flowers.

Birds begin to nest in late June. I have found a tiny brown Thornbill brooding on her nest in July. During late winter a transformation begins: Sarsaparilla blooms are evident, and if there has been sufficient rain, we may find Buttercups and Early Nancies.

In mid-spring the transformation is complete: now the Sarsaparilla flaunts a purple banner over rocks, grass tufts and up into saplings; Rice-flower is a smother of white; Alpine Grevillea blooms in red, orange and yellow, followed by Wattle blossom. By late September, Donkey Orchids are replaced by Waxlips, Milkmaids and sheets of golden Everlastings.

By mid October, pink and blue Sun Orchids are found, followed by tall pink-flowered Trigger plants, and a purple haze rising above the grass is composed of myriads of Chocolate Lilies with their delightful perfume. During the spring and early summer of 1981-82, the south-east corner of the reserve contained a wide variety of bird life. Combined with the song chorus of Rufus Whistlers could be heard the descending trills of White-throated Warblers, whistling calls of Leaden Flycatchers, pure ecstatic notes of song of grey Thrushes, the sleepy unfinished song of Western Warblers, and many more, all frantically busy at various stages of nest building and keeping house.

However, with the combined effects of housing on the western boundary, and an almost non-existent fence allowing the free entry of trail bikes and domestic pets, the bird population has dwindled. Some species are rarely, if ever, seen. The dumping of garden bulbs and other plants has been to the detriment of native flora.