

THE FIELD NATURALIST

NEWSLETTER NO. 130: SPRING, 2017

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



'Hungry Drosera' - D Andrews

'Drosera combo' (*D. peltata?*) – P Spencer



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Field Naturalists' Club
Inc.

Contributions to this
newsletter are
welcome and should
be emailed as above.

Despite unusual Spring weather, all scheduled outings in a varied programme went ahead as planned. Thanks everyone for contributions to the extensive programme, newsletter & of course, your company.

KILLAWARRA / WARBY RANGE STATE PARK

10th September, 2017

Nine members participated in this outing on a fine, cool day to visit the Camp Wildflower Walk in the Spring, having earlier visited in late July. Although a later Spring than usual, we were greeted by widespread Blue Fairies (*Cyanicula caerulea*) and more sporadic Leopard (*Diuris pardina*), Dwarf Greenhood (*Pterostylis nana*) and Nodding Greenhood (*Pterostylis nutans*) orchids.



Orchids

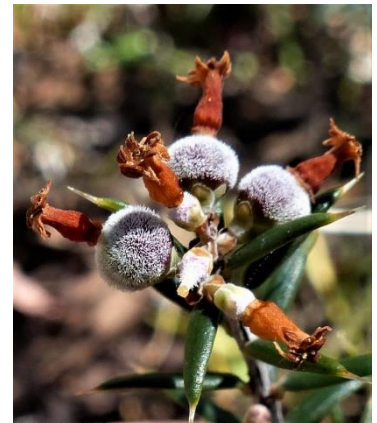
Blue Fairy (N Blair)

Leopard (N Blair)

Dwarf & Nodding Greenhoods (D Andrews)

The Peach Heath (*Lissanthe strigosa* subsp. *subulata*) was flowering along with the Urn Heath (*Melichrus urceolata*). Earlier this year (July) we had seen the Peach Heath in bud and had seen the fruits on a later visit 2 years ago.

Peach Heath (*Lissanthe strigosa*)



(Bud & Flower - D Andrews)

(Fruit - N Blair)

Colour was added by patches of blue Narrow-winged Daisies (*Brachyscome willisii*).

Later in the day along School House Road early flowering of the Rough Mint-bush (*Prostanthera denticulata*) was found. Large Galls were noted on some Golden Wattles (*Acacia pycnantha*) - see separate article, Page 4.



Rough Mint-bush (*Prostanthera denticulata*) – N Blair

20 bird species were found within the Park with the highlight being a couple of Painted Honeyeaters calling at School House Road. They departed without being seen. A further 27 birds were noted on the trip to and from the Park.

Killawarra	En route to Albury
Australian Raven	Australian Raven
Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike	Australian Shelduck
Black-chinned Honeyeater	Black Duck
Brown-headed Honeyeater	Black Falcon
Brown Thornbill	Black-tailed Native Hen
Common Bronzewing	Brown Falcon
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Collared Sparrowhawk
Friarbird, Noisy	Crested Pigeon
Fuscous Honeyeater	Eastern Rosella
Grey Fantail	Fan-tailed Cuckoo (juvenile)
Grey Shrike Thrush	Galah
Kookaburra	Kookaburra
Magpie	Little Pied Cormorant
Noisy Minor	Magpie
Painted Honeyeater (heard)	Magpie Goose (flying overhead)
Red Wattlebird	Magpie Lark
Weebill	Nankeen Kestrel
Welcome Swallow	Red-rumped Parrot
Western Warbler	Starling
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	Straw-necked Ibis
White-plumed Honeyeater	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
White-winged Chough	Superb Fairy Wren
	White-browed Babbler
	White-necked Heron
	White-faced Heron
	White-winged Chough
	Willy Wagtail
	Wood Duck
	Yellow-billed Spoonbill
	Yellow Rosella
22	30

Neil Blair

GALLS ON THE GOLDEN WATTLE (*Acacia pycnantha*)



These galls are induced by the chalcidoid wasp species, *Trichilogaster signiventris*, which targets mainly flower buds and hence can virtually eliminate seed production. Further the galls grow to an average weight of 907 mg and in high densities can often cause branches to break from trees or their main stems to split. For these reasons the wasp has been introduced to South Africa as a biological control for *Acacia pycnantha*, which itself was introduced to South Africa in the mid 1800's for dune reclamation and is now considered a woody weed in some areas.

Neil Blair

LAKE CARGELLIGO

8-10TH September, 2017

I recently tagged along at a joint Bird Australia outing to Lake Cargelligo. Sadly I was the only AWFN member able to make it, but was made feel very welcome despite the challenge of my minimal birding skills. I broke my trip at Fivebough Wetland on the way & 'Cococabana' (Cocoparra NP) on the way home.

Had an amazing time – so many new, beautiful birds. And such great viewings of them - the weather from Saturday on was lovely and sunny. In no particular order, my personal highlights were: Orange & White-fronted Chats; Splendid, Variegated & White-winged Fairy Wrens; Shy heath Wren; Southern Whiteface; Spotted Harrier; Crested Bellbird; Baillon's, Spotted & Spotless Crakes; Glossy Ibis; Mulga & Ringneck Parrots and Blue-bonnets (all firsts for me)

Sadly, had little talent identifying honeyeaters although I did see 2 new ones – Singing & Spiny-cheeked. The final 'official' bird count was 124.

Thank you BA for the trip organisation & hospitality.

Gail Steed

On a lovely, sunny Spring day 13 members visited the Northern section of the Park including Valley 2 Dam. Starting at Greenhill Dam we looked at unusual bite marks in both smooth and rough Eucalypt bark. Follow-up investigation by Eileen Collins and Will Ford suggest that Koalas are the likely culprits.

[For more information, see The October Friends of Chiltern October Newsletter

<http://friendsofchiltern.org.au/index.php/news/newsletters/417-newsletter-26-oct-2017>

Along Grevillea track we noted flowering Austral Indigo (*Indigofera australis*) and 3 orchid species - Blunt Greenhood (*Pterostylis curta*), Maroonhood (*Pterostylis pedunculata*) and Leopard Orchid (*Diuris pardina*). The Gold-dust Wattle (*Acacia acinacea*) was in full flower; the Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) was finishing and the Hedge Wattle (*Acacia paradoxa*) was just starting to flower. The Small-leaf Parrot-pea (*Dillwynia phyllicoides*) was flowering.

Along Chinese Track we looked at the 3 saltbushes in the Park - an isolated Hedge Saltbush (*Rhagodia spinescens*), and the common Saloop (*Einadia hastata*) and Nodding Saltbush (*Einadia nutans*).



Hedge Saltbush



Saloop

(N Blair)



Nodding Saltbush

We also noted an isolated patch of Rough Wattle (*Acacia aspera*) in full flower and the second type of Indigophera in the Park, Tick Indigo (*Indigofera adesmiifolia*)



Rough Wattle (P Spencer)

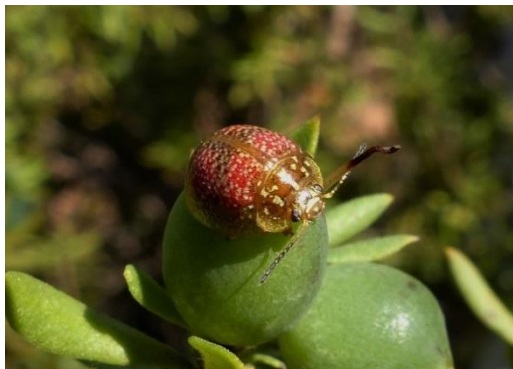


Tick Indigo (N Blair)



Lunch was held at the redeveloped Tuan Campsite followed by a walk along the start of Tuan Track. Dusky Fingers (*Caladenia fuscata*) were plentiful and we discussed the ways of distinguishing these from Pink Fingers (*Caladenia carnea*). Also noted was Ploughshare Wattle (*Acacia gunnii*) with hairy leaves compared to the more common glabrous type.

A leaf beetle (*Paropsisterna fastidiosa*) and a raft of eggs on a Golden Wattle leaf were also noted, Eileen confirming the eggs as laid by a Katydid, a long-horned Grasshopper.



(N Blair)

Finally we visited Valley 2 Dam which was very full and, among other water birds, noted a Black Swan sitting on a nest built on the emergent tops of a group of submerged Giant Rushes (*Juncus ingens*).



Yellow-billed Spoonbill (*Platalea flavipes*)
(P Spencer)

42 species of birds were found on the day and it was noted the Woodswallows were back.

Chiltern Mt Pilot NP 20 th September 2017	
Blackbird	Noisy Miner
Black Duck	Pied Butcherbird
Black-chinned Honeyeater	Pelican
Brown Falcon	Red Wattlebird
Brown Tree-creeper	Red-rumped Parrot
Common Bronzewing	Restless Flycatcher
Dusky Woodswallow	Royal Spoonbill
Eastern Rosella	Silvereeye
Fuscous Honeyeater	Spotted Pardalote
Galah	Superb Blue Wren
Great Cormorant	Weebill
Great Egret	White-breasted Woodswallow
Grey Fantail	White-faced Heron
Grey Shrike Thrush	White-neced Heron
Kookaburra	White-plumed Honeyeater
Little Friarbird	White-throated Tree-creeper
Little Lorikeet	White-winged Chough
Magpie	Willy Wagtail
Magpie-lark	Yellow-billed Spoonbill
Mistletoe Bird	Yellow Robin
Noisy Friarbird	Yellow Tufted Honeyeater
	Total:42

Neil Blair

Club members accompanied by two guests (who saw the outing advertised on Ecoportal) visited both Kentucky State Forest and Redlands Hill. At Kentucky Forest, thanks to the work done by Neil on an earlier visit, we saw new plants – Flannel Cudweed (*Actinobole uliginosum*), a small, ground-hugging plant); Scented Sun Orchid (*Thelymitra megalyptra*); and Small Purslane (*Calandrinia eremaea*), small pink flowers with basal succulent leaves). Bulbine Lillies and Dusky Caladenias were widespread, with our visitors finding Spider Orchids (*Caladenia callitrophilia*) near the Balldale Rd and on one of the tracks. Thankfully, for the moment it seems that Forestry have ceased logging and clearing the area. Apostle Birds and White-winged Choughs were sighted alongside Balldale Road.



Spider Orchid
(D Andrews)



Scented Sun Orchid
(P Spencer)



Pink Fingers (*Caladenia carnea*)
(D Andrews)



Fan-tailed Cuckoo (*Cacomantis flabelliformis*) Sacred Kingfisher (*Todiramphus sanctus*)
– P Spencer

The second location was Redlands Hill Reserve on Tom Roberts Road. The highlight was not on the reserve itself but on Tom Roberts Rd where a swirling flock (estimated at more than 1000) of White-breasted and Masked Woodswallows was seen.



White-browed Woodswallow (*Artamus superciliosus*) –P Spencer

KENTUCKY FOREST & REDLAND HILL 23 rd September 2017	
Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike	Red-capped Robin
Brown Tree-creeper	Restless Flycatcher
Eastern Shrike-tit	Rufous Songlark
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Rufous Whistler
Galah	Sacred Kingfisher
Golden Whistler (F)	Western Gerygone
Grey Fantail	White-browed Babbler
Grey Shrike Thrush	White-plumed Honeyeater
Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo	Willy Wagtail
Peaceful Dove	Yellow Thornbill
Raven	Yellow-rumped Thornbill
	Total: 22

David Coleman

WOOMARGAMA STATE FOREST

8th October, 2017

9 members ventured out on a cloudy, rain-threatening day that behaved itself till 3.30 when the outing was abandoned in heavy rain.

We commenced the day on the periphery of the Park in Hanel's Rd., a Black Cypress Forest on a granite outcrop affording great views to the Table Top Range to the west. The Rock Lily (*Bulbine glauca*) was prolific and flowering. Also present was the Nodding Blue-lily (*Stypandra glauca*) and the Variable Groundsel (*Senecio pinnatifolius*). The Nodding Greenhood (*Pterostylis nutans*) and Pink Fingers (*Caladenia carnea*) were flowering. A flock of noisy Woodswallows were flying overhead at morning tea but too high to identify which species.



Variable Groundsel – N Blair



White-throated Gerygone
– D Andrews

We then proceeded into the Park along the Hume and Hovell Track. This section was a Small-leaved Peppermint, Mixed Box and Blakely's Red Gum Forest. There was an understorey of Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*) and Red-stem Wattle (*Acacia rubida*) and a covering of Mountain Flat-pea (*Platylobium montanum*). Also noted were the Grey Guinea-flower (*Hibbertia obtusifolia*), Creamy Candles (*Stackhousia monogyna*) and a number of Waxlips (*Glossodia major*) amongst the prolific native Tussock Grass (*Poa sieberiana*). A highlight was watching 2 - 3 White-throated Gerygones building a nest.



Phantom Wattle – N Blair

On the way to lunch we dropped into the old quarry revegetation site and looked at the iconic Phantom Wattle (*Acacia phasmoides*) that had just finished flowering and noted a Welcome Swallows nest in the shelter.



Mountain Flat Pea – D Andrews, N Blair

Lunch was held (with a campfire) at the Samuel Bollard Camping Area, a higher elevation with a Brittle Gum (*Eucalyptus mannifera*) and both Small and Broad-leaved Peppermint (*E. radiata* and *dives*) overstory and an understory containing Cassinia, both Common and Shiny, (*Cassinia aculeata* and *longifolia*). Here we found a Green Christmas Beetle (*Xylonichus eucalypti*) and noted the Honey-pots (*Acrotriche serrulata*) were starting to fruit. A walk revealed mats of the Dainty Bird-orchid (*Chiloglottis trapeziformis*) alongside Maroonhoods (*Pterostylis pedunculata*), Nodding Greenhoods (*P. nutans*) and Tall Greenhoods (*P. melagramma*). Also found was Cut-leaf Daisy (*Brachyscome multifida*), Spoon Daisy (*B. spathulata*) and Woolly Grevillea (*G. lanigera*). A flock of noisy Currawongs passed through and it was felt it was a mixed flock with both Pied and Grey calling.



Honey-pots – N Blair



Dainty Bird-orchid – D Andrews

Another lovely outing thanks to the rain holding off and altogether a bird list of 25 species.

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Rufous Whistler
Brown Thornbill	Shining Bronze Cuckoo
Brown-headed Honeyeater	Spotted Pardalote
Crimson Rosella	Striated Pardalote
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
Galah	Welcome Swallow
Gang Gang Cockatoo	Western Gerygone
Grey Fantail	White-browed Scrubwren
Grey Currawong	White-throated Gerygone
Noisy Friar Bird	White-throated Treecreeper
Olive-backed Oriole	Woodswallow sp.
Pied Currawong	Yellow-faced Honeyeater,
	Yellow Robin
	Total: 25

Neil Blair

On the 15th October, a pleasant Sunday morning, the AWFNs joined with the Friends of Nail Can Hill (FONCH) and the Albury City Council (ACC) to hold a public wildflower walk. Earlier planning determined the walks, surveyed the flowering at the time, produced and erected photo-guides for a self-guided walk to be available for the next month.

On the day FONCH and ACC provided information and pamphlets about the Flora of Nail Can Hill and talked about their activities in the Reserve, encouraging interested people to join.

About 30 people then broke into 2 groups for guided walks in the Reserve. The interest and questions of the participants was strong and they expressed good satisfaction and enjoyment with the walks at their conclusion.

The AWFNs enjoyed joining up with other groups and contributing to the day.

Later in the month, in overcast conditions 5 members participated in an afternoon walk in Nail Can Hill, starting at the Pemberton St. entrance. Fortunately there was only one brief, light shower during the walk. Scented Sun-orchids (*Thelymitra megcalyptra*) were flowering at the entrance and although the season has not produced an abundance of wildflowers there was plenty of yellow, white and blue to be seen during the walk.

Milkmaids (*Burchardia umbellata*) and the Slender Rice-flower (*Pimelea linifolia*) contributed most to the whites and Tall Bluebells (*Wahlenbergia stricta*) and the Black-anther Flax-lily (*Dianella revoluta*) to the blues. The yellows were most abundant with Sticky Everlasting (*Xerochrysum viscosum*), Hoary Sunray (*Leucochrysum albicans*) and Yellow Rush Lily (*Tricoryne elatior*) prominent, and Common Sunray (*Triptilodiscus pygmaeus*) and Scaly Buttons (*Leptorhynchos squamatus*) also noted.



Yellow Rush Lily (P Spencer)



Scaly Buttons (N Blair)

The peas and wattles were starting to pod and the Hop-bush (*Dodonaea viscosa*) varieties were flowering - Wedge-leaf Hop-bush (var. *cuneata*) and fruiting - Slender Hop-bush (var. *angustissima*).

We had good views of the Scarlet Honeyeater after being alerted by its call and a Rufous Whistler serenaded us from just above our heads. Perhaps the highlight was hearing the Mistletoe Bird and then observing the female fly to and enter her nest (see below).



Bird list Nail Can Hill, 25th October, 2017: Cool, cloudy.

Blackbird	Red-capped Robin
Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike	Red Wattlebird
Buff-rumped Thornbill	Rufous Whistler
Grey Fantail	Scarlet Honeyeater
Grey Shrike-thrush	Silvereye
Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo	Striated Thornbill
Kookaburra	Yellow Rosella
Magpie	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Mistletoe Bird	Weebill
Noisy Friar Bird	White Ibis
Pelican	White-throated Treecreeper
	Total: 22

Neil Blair

...and for comparison, an ode to Nail Can Hill by past member, May Pagenstecher (courtesy of her neice).

Spring Delights 2

Nail Can Hill in the Spring is a glorious sight
 With its mantle of green grass and shrubbery bright,
 Lilies mauve and yellow, orchids blue, milkmaids white,
 Lying like snowflakes, airy and light;
 All in a carpet of beauty unite
 To fill all who see it with deepest delight.

While overhead on the light morning breeze
 Drifts a warm scent of honey from blossoming trees;
 Some tiny thornbills flutter among
 The swaying branches of a stringybark gum,
 Snapping up insects too small for our sight
 From trembling leaves at a very great height.

A pair of Grey Fantails flying gaily around
 Have a nest in a sapling not far from the ground,
 Made of fine fibres bound with cobwebs of lace,
 Shaped like a wineglass without any base,
 A parent bringing food flies overhead
 To feed its small chicks in their dainty warm bed;
 Three wee necks stretch high, bills agape in each head,
 As they jostle each other in their haste to be fed.

A bold Rufous Whistler pair also live here
 Their melodious whistling so joyous to hear;
 In a dead thorny bush they have built a nest
 Secure from cats, or from some other pest
 Which would tear down their home and put them to flight,
 They brood in safely, while watching from eyes, dark and bright.

A sweet sleeping warbling can now be heard,
Which is the song of a small greyish bird;
The male Western Warbler, warbling clear
While busily his hen builds a nest very near;
Of fibres and cobwebs, never seeming to rest,
While fetching materials to fashion the nest;
A hooded side entrance she adds to the dome
With spider egg sacs adorning the home.

The delight of bird lovers, one and all,
Are the Double-Bar Finches with their plaintive call;
They're increased in numbers, and it gave us a thrill
When we found that they had nested on Nail Can Hill!
They have tiny white faces bordered with black,
Black white spotted wings and a little brown back;
Their nest is of grass stems, round like a ball,
Up to six birds will roost in one, though it's quite small.
In their thorny bush haven, snug, watertight,
They may sleep there in safety for many a night.

These are a few of the pleasures that you
May enjoy if you visit Nail Can Hill too;
Mar not the beauty. Leave no rubbish behind,
But help to take care of the treasures you find;
Ensure future generations enjoy Nail Can where
New delights and discoveries may wait for them there.

FROG IDENTIFICATION EVENING (Wonga Wetlands)
with Dr David Hunter

22nd October, 2017

[Dr Hunter has worked as a Threatened Species Officer in southern NSW for 15 years and developed a range of threatened frog recovery programs including those for both Coroboree frog species. In recognition of this & his role in a collaborative project with Zoos Victoria, David recently received a Victorian Government Extinction Warrior Award. He is passionate about biodiversity conservation (and generous with his time!)]

While waiting for sunset, Dave explained how to find a frog when it is calling. Using the triangulation method, 3 people surround the frog, keeping roughly equal positions from each other. Each person approaches, carefully and slowly, pointing as they move closer to where the frog can be heard.

So then, once the sun went down completely and the calling began in earnest, along the ponds we went, pointing torches in attempts to locate our quarry. With Dave's help, we were able to locate the Eastern Banjo Frog and Striped Marsh Frog on the pond edges, Peron's Tree Frog on the posts and tree trunks, and Plains Tree Frog in shrubby foliage, while the Common Eastern Froglet and Bibron's Toadlet called from their hiding places. Dave showed us how to hold the torch beam between our eyes till we got the frog's eye shine, then to move the torch laterally away from the head whilst keeping the beam on the shining object. If the shine disappeared then we had a frog, but if the shine remained then it was only a droplet of moisture. Useful information!



Photos by Peter Spencer.

***Limnodynastes dumerilii* - Eastern Banjo Frog.**

Also known as the pobblebonk frog.

The call is a short resonating 'bonk'.
Note the prominent raised gland on the lower leg.



***Litoria peronii* - Peron's Tree Frog.**

Sometimes known as the maniacal cackle frog.

The eye has a vertical stripe that, in combination with the horizontal pupil, gives the appearance of a cross-shaped pupil. The armpits, groin and backs of thighs have bold yellow and black marbling. The toes are half webbed and toe-pads are large.

For further information on our local and other frogs see the 2017 State of NSW and Office of Environment and Heritage publication, **Frogs of south-west NSW, a glovebox guide to their identification, ecology and conservation, Second Edition.** By David Hunter and Helen P. Waudby.

CHILTERN MT PILOT NP (Chiltern Section)

28th September, 2017

Seven members left Albury in a light shower but enjoyed a lovely sunny morning and early afternoon before rain arrived at 2.30pm.

Our first stop was along the Barnawartha Depot Rd and although we only had 2 flyby views of a Regent Honeyeater they were in full sunshine and we will not forget the striking illuminated Yellow and Black colours. A Speckled Warbler was also seen. The site is most colourful following post-bushfire regeneration with swathes of Sticky Everlastings (*Xerochrysum viscosum*) interspersed with Chocolate Lilies (*Arthropodium strictum*), Tall Bluebells (*Wahlenbergia stricta*), Black-anther Flax-lilies (*Dianella revoluta*). Tiger Orchids (*Diuris sulphurea*) were also found. Black Swamp Wallabies checked us out and the calls of the Common Bronzewing and Peaceful Doves were continuous. Further along the road we came across a patch of Native Flax (*Linum marginale*).



Native Flax – P Spencer



hybrid Sun-orchids – N Blair

Our next stop was the Freeway roadside walk on Perimeter Track. This area was noted to be very dry and the predominant shrubs, Mountain Grevillea/Cat's Claws (*Grevillea alpina*) and Hairy Geebung (*Persoonia rigida*), were poor in flower and fruit although the Daphne Heath (*Brachyloma daphnoides*) was doing better. The Grey Guinea-flower (*Hibbertia obtusifolia*), Common Wedge-pea (*Gompholobium heugelii*) and Pincushions (*Brunonia australis*) added colour. An echidna and 2 dragonfly species, the Blue Skimmer (*Orthetrum caledonicum*) and the Scarlet Percher (*Diplacodes haematodes*), kept the cameras busy.

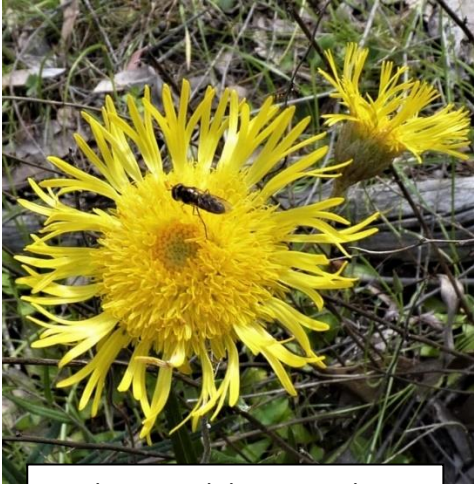


Blue Skimmer (P Spencer)



Scarlet Percher (P Spencer)

At Muffler Rd, to the calling of the Olive-backed Oriole, we found hybrid Sun-orchids (*Thelymitra X truncata*) from the Dotted (*Thelymitra ixioides*) and the Slender (*T. pauciflora*) Sun-orchids. Also found were Tiger Orchids (*Diuris sulphurea*), Milkmaids (*Burchardia umbellata*) and Trigger Plants (*Stylidium graminifolium*). Along Cyanide Rd we found Austral Bugles (*Ajuga australis*), Showy Podolepis (*Podolepis jaceoides*) and Scaly Buttons (*Leptorhynchus squamatus*). The Podolepis were attracting large numbers of Pintail beetles (*Hoshihananomia leucosticte*) and other pollinators.



Showy Podolepis – N Blair



Pintail beetle– N Blair

A late lunch was enjoyed at Honeyeater Picnic Area with the resident Brown Treecreepers before rain brought an end to a lovely day.

A total of 24 birds were seen with the Fuscus Honeyeater the most common.



Fuscus Honeyeater – P Spencer

Bird list Chiltern National Park, 28th October, 2017: Warm & sunny morning; rain in afternoon.

Australasian Grebe	Olive-backed Oriole
Black-chinned Honeyeater	Pallid Cuckoo
Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike	Peaceful Dove
Brown Treecreeper	Regent Honeyeater
Common Bronzewing	Rufous Songlark
Crested Shrike-tit	Rufous Whistler
Fuscus Honeyeater	Sacred Kingfisher
Grey Shrike-thrush	Speckled Warbler
Kookaburra	Superb Fairy-wren
Magpie	Weebill
Noisy Friar Bird	Willie Wagtail
Noisy Miner	White-winged chough
	Total: 24

Neil Blair

EWARTS RD BARANDUDA & WOORAGEE

12TH November, 2017

Our first stop was at the pull-off where the creek runs under the road. Here we looked at the Mistletoes in flower – Grey Mistletoe (*Amyema quandang*) which is usually found on Acacia, and frequently on Silver Wattle as here, with its upturned deep red petals and chalky-grey leaves, and - Drooping Mistletoe (*Amyema pendula*), with its pendulous bright orange-red flowers and long bottle green leaves. This acts as host plant for several butterfly species and as a nectar source for nectar-feeding birds and is the most common mistletoe in Victoria. Many birds were spotted here but we were dismayed at the cover of thistle post last season's fuel reduction burning.

We travelled on to the top of the road, as far as public access is allowed. After a tea-break in the sunshine we wandered through the cooler area of tall Brittle Gum (*Eucalyptus mannifera*) and Broad-leaved Peppermint (*Eucalyptus dives*) with a grassy ground layer of Red-anthered Wallaby-grass interspersed with flowering Tiger Orchids (*Diurus sulphurea*), Musky Caladenia (*Caladenia gracilis*), Ivy-leaf Violet (*Viola hederacea*), Purple Violet (*V. betonicifolia*), Austral Buttercups (*Ranunculus australis*), Slender Rice-flower (*Pimelea linifolia* subsp. *linifolia*), Chocolate Lily (*Arthropodium strictus*), Prickly Woodruff (*Asperula scoparia*), Bidgee Widgee, Prickly

Starwort (*Stellaria pungens*), Mountain Lagenophora (*Lagenophora montana*) and Spur-wing Daisy (*Brachyscome willisii*). Further down the track a mid-storey of Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*) – is this native to this site or has it spread from elsewhere?, Sweet Bursaria (*Bursaria spinosa* subsp. *spinosa*) and Common Cassinia (*Cassinia aculeata*) was harbouring Scrub-wrens, Fairywrens, Thornbills and Grey Fantails whilst Bowerbirds and Whistlers called from the taller canopy. On this site the wonderful old hollow-laden trees host a population of Greater Glider.

Trigger plants (*Stylidium graminifolium*) were seen on the road verge in places with Button Everlasting (*Coronidium scorpioides*) and Yam Daisy (*Microseris walteri*) flowers and Helmet Orchid (*Corybas* sp.) leaves also found in the unburnt side of the road.

From there we made our way to a private property at Wooragee where we ate lunch on the shady grassed area in front of the house from where we were treated to views of Painted Honeyeaters.

Moving on to Lake Kerford at Stanley we were hoping to glimpse the Red-browed Treecreeper but no such luck. We did however find flowering Common Bird-orchids (*Chiloglottis valida*) opposite the carpark and enjoyed a nice stroll down the track looking at Snowy Daisy-bush (*Olearia lirata*) and Mountain Mirbelia (*Mirbelia oxylaboides*). The Mountain Swamp Gums (*Eucalyptus camphora* ssp. *humeana*) with distinctive white flowers and ovoid dull green leaves seemed to be the only eucalypts flowering that day. Neil pointed out 2 Water-ferns, the Soft Water-fern (*Blechnum minus*) and the Fishbone Water-fern (*Blechnum nudum*) pointing out differences in the frond leaflets/pinna arrangement and the way they attach to the stalk/rachis to help in identification.

***Blechnum minus* – Soft Water Fern**



***Blechnum nudum* – Fishbone Fern**



A rest stop near Lake Kerford (N Blair)



Birds observed were:

Black-chinned Honeyeater	Olive-backed Oriole
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Painted Honeyeater
Brown Thornbill	Pied Currawong
Crimson Rosella	Red Wattlebird
Dollar Bird	Red-browed Finch
Eastern Rosella	Rufous Whistler
Eastern Scrubwren	Sacred Kingfisher
Eastern Shrike-tit	Satin Bowerbird
Eurasian Coot	Scarlet Honeyeater
Golden Whistler	Silvereeye
Great Cormorant	Spotted Pardalote
Grey Fantail	Striated Pardalote
Grey Shrike-thrush	Striated Thornbill
Grey Teal	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
Jacky Winter	Superb Fairywren
King Parrot	Wedge-tailed Eagle
Kookaburra	Welcome Swallow
Little Black Cormorant	White-eared Honeyeater
Little Pied Cormorant	White-faced Heron
Magpie	White-throated Gerygone
Magpie-lark	Yellow Robin
Mistletoe Bird	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Nankeen Kestrel	Yellow-rumped Thornbill
Noisy Friarbird	
	Total: 47

Bernie & Glenda Datson

WINTON WETLANDS

25th November, 2017



Winton wetlands is a recently decommissioned irrigation storage area. A history of the swamp has been extracted from the website

<https://wintonwetlands.org.au/winton-wetlands-project/project-overview/>

“The flooding of the Winton (Mokoan) Swamp in 1971 to create Lake Mokoan was broadly welcomed for the economic and recreational values that it promised. It created a very large water storage that irrigated thousands of hectares of agriculture, adding \$10-\$15 million to the local economy each year. It was one of the best Murray Cod and Golden Perch fisheries in

Victoria. It was also used for hunting and sailing. At the same time the new reservoir inundated around 7,000 Ha of agricultural land, ancient forests and beautiful and unique wetlands. The flooding killed around 150,000 river red gums including many Aboriginal scar trees that still stand today, having re-emerged from the lake as dead stags but still retaining their scarring and their stories.

Over a run of dry years, Lake Mokoan sometimes dried out completely and at other times was subject to blue-green algal breakouts. Water managers seeking ways to save water in the Murray-Darling system noted that the large and shallow water body was losing far more water through evaporation than it contributed to agriculture, and raised the question of its decommissioning. This met with strong local opposition from irrigators and recreational users of the Lake. After a great deal of protest and community anguish, the lake was decommissioned and drained in 2010. Water that would otherwise have been stored in Lake Mokoan was diverted to achieve ecological flows for the Snowy River and other rivers.

In 2010 the Winton wetlands Committee of Management was charged with restoring and renewing the old dam site.”

So, on what turned out to be a 36 degree day, club members set off to Winton to view some of the changes. Last year our trip was cancelled due to too much water and closed tracks. This year the roads were navigable but Ashmeads and Bill Friday Swamps were dry. We did however see quite a few birds whilst travelling between sites. After morning tea at the shelter at Bill Friday Swamp and checking out the interesting historical information on the interpretive signage there, a journey to the other side of the wetlands to the Mokoan Hub and Cafe proved a very pleasant, air-conditioned spot to take a break from the heat to make use of the hub's telescope, with great views across the wetland through the panoramic window. Particular attention was given to the two Nobbi Dragons on the stem of a small eucalypt just outside the window, whilst Stephanie made use of the flying fox in the children's playground!

***Amphibolurus nobbi* –
Nobbi Dragon**



A stroll to the Observation Pad enabled great views of Yellow-billed and Royal Spoonbills and the Great Egret whilst Golden-headed Cisticolas remained hidden in the rushes. The best view of the day was possibly the White-bellied Sea Eagle being chased by 5 Whistling Kites.



Richard's (Australian) Pipit (P Spencer)



unidentified dragonfly (D Andrews)

After lunch near the boat ramp many wandered down onto the causeway and inadvertently flushed 5 Native Hens which scampered away giving great views to those remaining at the higher elevation using Neil's spotting scope.

At 2.30pm many called it a day but some continued onto Greens Hill where not much except White Cockatoos screeched at us. It was a good day in a spot not often visited by the group, particularly since the changes to the water regime there.

Birds observed were:

Australian Raven	Golden-headed Cisticola	Royal Spoonbill
Black Swan	Grey Teal	Rufous Songlark
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoo	Spur-winged Plover
Black-winged Stilt	Intermediate Egret	Straw-necked Ibis
Brown Falcon	Jacky Winter	Striated Pardalote
Brown Goshawk	Little Grass Bird	Superb Fairwren
Chestnut Teal	Little Pied Cormorant	Swamp Harrier
Comon (Indian) Myna	Little Raven	Wedge-tailed Eagle
Crested Pigeon	Magpie	Welcome Swallow
Crimson Rosella	Magpie-lark	Whistling Kite
Dusky Woodswallow	Nankeen Kestrel	White Cockatoo
Eastern Rosella	Native Hen	White Ibis
Eurasian Coot	Pacific Black Duck	White-bellied Sea-eagle
European Sparrow*	Pelican	White-plumed Honeyeater
European Starling*	Red Wattlebird	White-winged Chough
Fairy Martin	Red-rumped Parrot	Willy Wagtail
Fantail Cuckoo	Reed Warbler	Yellow-billed Spoonbill
Galah	Richard's Pipit	Yellow-rumped Thornbill
		Total: 54

Bernie & Glenda Datson

Upcoming Outings – Summer 2018

[8th and 9th December – Porepunkah and Mt Buffalo. Christmas breakup]

Excellent weekend, but been & gone; see next (Summer) newsletter. Ed

~ 15th - 18th Jan – Falls Creek. For details please contact Neil Blair

~ 9th February – AGM, Wonga Wetlands (7pm, please bring small plate of supper to share)

~ 11th February – West Albury Wetlands (Boat Ramp Kremur St, 4pm, evening outing)

~ 24th February – Wonga Wetlands (8am, morning activity to beat the heat)

Full outing details for 2018 will be compiled next year & published in separate list. Contact Secretary for a copy or access via Ecoportal.

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

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Note: Electronic Payments -

Payments to the club can be made via Internet banking using details below.

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 to include **your** name)*