

THE FIELD NATURALIST

NEWSLETTER NO. 134: SPRING, 2018

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



Smooth Darling Pea (*Swainsonia. galegifolia*) with Hover Fly,
Swainsonia Reserve (P Spencer)



Above - Top LHS

Mountain Hood-orchid, Mt Big Ben
(N. Blair)

Top RHS

Musk Hood-orchid, Mt Stanley
(R. Andrews)

Bottom LHS

Tiger Orchid, Mt Big Ben
(R. Andrews)

Bottom RHS

Broad-lipped Diuris, Warby Ranges
(R. Andrews)



Spot the moth! Lake Kerford
(R. Andrews)

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MT GRANYA STATE PARK

9th September 2018

Seven of us met at Bellbridge before heading out through Talgarno to Granya State Forest where we stopped at the Cotton Tree Creek Reserve for morning tea. What a beautiful spot! The sun shone on several types of wattles as Yellow Robins and Superb Fairy-wrens darted around us. There was also a large flock of Red-browed Finches in the nearby camping area.

We then headed up through the forest to the Scout Hut which was constructed in 1937 and refurbished in the 1990s. There were extensive areas of Austral Bear's-ear in bloom, some Greenhood Orchids, lots of rock ferns and a rotting log with some magnificent bracket fungi. A Wedge-tailed Eagle soared overhead and a raptor took off with prey in its beak.



A notable sighting was a Mouse Spider, about the size of a 50¢ piece.

The whole area was quite magnificent as the wattle blossom shone in the sun, Grey Fantails flitted around while Treecreepers and Thornbills kept us on our toes. Then the path became narrower and steeper as we clambered over rocks to get up to a spot overlooking the Granya Falls where water crashed over vertical rocks to the valley below.

Red Headed Mouse Spider (*Missulena occatoria*)



Tiny Spiridium (*S. cinereum*)



Eastern Yellow Robin (*Eopsaltria australis*)

Returning to Granya, we then headed to the top of Mt Granya where we had lunch just near the fire tower. There was a splendid view but we were more interested in two pairs of Flame Robins that flitted between the rocks and grasses along with quite a number of Superb Fairy-wrens. By this time, it was cloudy and the temperature had dropped but we went for a walk through the nearby bush before heading for home. We all agreed that it had been a most enjoyable and successful outing.

Clare Russell

(Photos – R. Andrews)

Birdlist – Granya SP (Phillip Seely)	
Blackbird	Red-browed Finch
Brown Thornbill	Spotted Pardalote
Crimson Rosella	Striated Pardalote
Eastern Shrike-tit	Striated Thornbill
Eastern Spinebill	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
Flame Robin	Superb Fairy Wren
Grey Fantail	Wedge-tailed Eagle
Grey Shrike Thrush	White-browed Scrub Wren
Kookaburra	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Magpie	Yellow Robin
Pied Currawong	
Total = 21	

Plants noted (R & A Andrews)	
<i>S. cinereum</i>	Tiny Spiridium
<i>Achrotriche serrulata</i>	Honey-pots
<i>H. violacea</i>	Hardenbergia
<i>H. heterophylla</i>	Common Hovea
<i>Melichrus urceolatus</i>	Urn Heath
<i>Pterostylis curta</i>	Blunt Greenhood
<i>P.nana</i>	Nodding Greenhood
<i>Persoonia sp.</i>	Geebung
<i>Wermibia dioica</i>	Early Nancy
<i>Parudia vaginata</i>	Yellow Star
<i>Chiloglottis valida</i>	Common Bird Orchid
<i>Platylobium formosum</i>	Handsome Flat-pea (flowering)
<i>Pultenea cunninghanii</i>	Grey Bush-pea (not in flower)

WARBY RANGES

22nd September, 2018

16 members enjoyed this outing to Wenham's Camp in the Warby Ranges. The morning walk took in part of the Friends Walking Trail south of the Camp: lunch was had at the Camp and the afternoon walk took in part of the Walking Trail north of the Camp. A lunch time highlight was Bernie sharing his lunch and water bottle with a Raven henceforth known as "Bloody Thief".

There was a good display of Spring flowering with *Acacia rubida* (Red-stem Wattle) and *A. buxifolia* (Box-leaf Wattle) in flower and *A. triptera* (Spur-wing Wattle) in bud.



Box-leaf Wattle (*Acacia buxifolia*)
(Photo – N. Blair)



Spur-wing Wattle (*A. triptera*)
(Photo – P. Spencer)

The *Dillwynia juniperina* (Prickly Parrot-pea) was spectacular in patches and there was a good selection of ground orchids including: *Diuris chryseopsis* (Golden Moths) and *D. pardina* (Leopard), *Glossodia major* (Waxlips), *Cyrtostylis reniformis* (Gnat) and *Pterostylis mutica* (Midget Greenhood).



Leopard Orchid (*D. pardina*)
(Photo – P. Spencer)



Gnat Orchid (*C. reniformis*)
(Photo – R. Andrews)



Midget Greenhood (*P. mutica*)
(Photo – N. Blair)



The entomologists were entertained by a flower spider with its captured beetle and a number of Case Moths.
(see photos above – R. Andrews)

The bird count for the day was 32 – refer Phillip’s list below.

Yellow-rumped Thornbill
(P. Spencer)

Neil Blair

Birdlist – Warby Ranges Sep 2018 (Phillip Seely)	
Australian Raven	Red-capped Robin (Juv. & female)
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Red Wattlebird
Brown-headed Honeyeater	Rufous Whistler
Brown Thornbill	Scarlet Robin (female)
Eastern Rosella	Shining Bronze Cuckoo
Eastern Shrike-tit	Silvereye
Eastern Spinebill	Striated Pardalote
Flame Robin	Striated Thornbill
Gang Gang Cockatoo	Superb Fairy-wren
Grey Fantail	Varied Sittella
Grey Shrike Thrush	Weebill
Jacky Winter	Western Gerygone
Kookaburra	Willy Wagtail
Magpie	White-plumed Honeyeater
Olive-backed Oriole	White-throated Treecreeper
Pink & Grey Galah	Yellow-rumped Thornbill
Total = 32	

This outing was a quickly arranged substitute for the visit to the northern end of Benambra National Park and private woodland. A CSU environment student, Tilly, joined us for the day as a visitor. Kylie Durant from Holbrook Landcare kindly agreed to lead us, and we met at Woomargama village. After a drive along Quarry road, we reached Hanel Road where we travelled south-westwards about 3.5 km to the Hanel Lookout path and a short walk down to it provided a remarkable vista. We could see an arc from south round to the north-west including Woomargama Station below, Benambra and Tabletop Ranges to the west and far to the north-west, The Rock stood out on the horizon. Kylie gave us a very interesting short talk about Holbrook Landcare activities, spanning over 20 years. Numerous farm properties around the national park have co-ordinated their conservation support for extensive revegetation. She demonstrated this with vegetation maps she had brought, showing that the area of woodlands have risen from about 5% to 15%, which is quite remarkable. The path to Hanel Lookout had good examples of Nodding Blue Lilies and stands of yellow Bulbine Lilies (*Bulbine bulbosa*), Spider Orchids and a few Tall Greenhood Orchids near to the rocks.



Nodding Blue Lily
Styphandra glauca
(P Spencer)



Spider Orchid
Caladenia tentaculata var. *tensa*



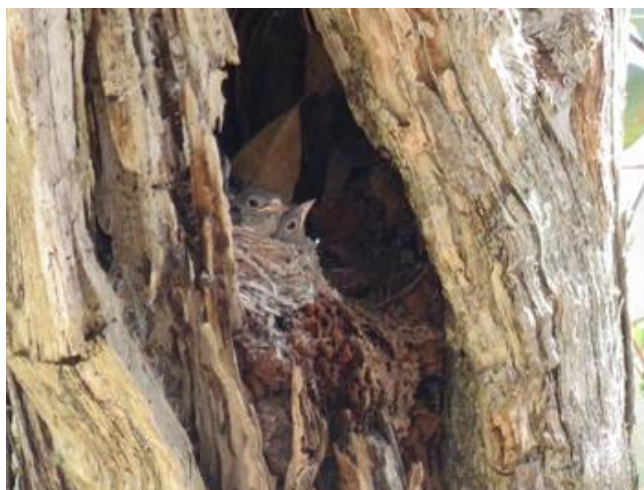
Tall Greenhood
Pterostylus melagramma
(R Andrews)

The floral highlights I can recall, walking along sections of the tracks, were some grass tussocks, the largest being Red-anthered Wallaby Grass (*Joycea pallida*), and some Poas. The eucalypts were an interesting assemblage: *E. dives* (Broad-leaved Peppermint), *E. mannifera* (Brittle Gum), *E. macrorhyncha* (Red Stringybark) and *E. goniocalyx* (Long-leaved Box).

We had lunch at the junction with the Wagra and Hume and Hovell Tracks. A search by Kylie for the Spotted Quail Thrush she had seen previously was unfortunately negative.

Another highlight was when James spotted a Scarlet Robin with a nest in a stump containing two young.

John Shepherd



Birdlist – Woomargama, Oct 2018 (Bernie Datson)	
Australian Raven	Rufous Whistler
Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike	Scarlet Robin
Brown Tree-creeper	Shining Bronze Cuckoo
Crimson Rosella	Spotted Pardalote
Eastern Rosella	Striated Thornbill
Galah	Superb Blue Wren
Gang Gang	White-throated Gerygone
Grey Fantail	White-throated Treecreeper
Kookaburra	White-winged Chough
Magpie	Willy Wagtail
Noisy Miner	Yellow-crested Cockatoo
Olive-backed Oriole	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Pied Currawong	Yellow-rumped Thornbill
Rainbow Bee-eater	Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo
Total = 28	

GALORE HILL RESERVE, LOCKHART

27th October, 2018

8 members braved the long drive and dry conditions for an enjoyable outing enhanced by the sculptures and other art in Lockhart township.

First stop was the roadside leading into the reserve where a number of post-flowering dryland Acacias (*A. lineata* – Streaked Wattle, *A. hakeoides* – Hakea Wattle, *A. brachybotrya*) were noted together with a still-flowering Senna (Cassia), *S. artemisioides* subsp. *petiolaris* – Woody Cassia.



Woody Cassia - *S. artemisioides* subsp. *petiolaris* (Photo – N. Blair)

On entering the reserve we took the perimeter road which was crossed first by a Lace Monitor and then by an Echidna. A group of Southern Whiteface birds were observed.



Lace Monitor (Photo – P. Spencer)



We found a small grove of Quandong trees (*Santalum acuminatum*) which were in fruit and all were infested with Fleshy Mistletoe. The fruit was the rarer yellow colour (usually red).



Fleshy Mistletoe fruit

Quandong (*Santalum acuminatum*) – N. Blair



On the return we looked at some Hooked Needlewood (*Hakea tephrosperma*) which was fruiting with some open displaying the seed. Another Cassia, the Silver Cassia – *Senna artemisioides* subsp. *zygophylla*, and another Wattle, *Acacia decora* – Western Silver Wattle, were also noted.

Hooked Needlewood (*Hakea tephrosperma*) – N. Blair



Lunch was had at the summit looking over the surrounding plains (Photo – P. Spencer). A group of kangaroos moved on as we arrived and a Peregrine Falcon provided the entertainment. A walk through the She-oak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) forest confirmed the thought that we were too late for the Glossy Black Cockatoos which visit there earlier in the spring.



Grey Butcher Bird and 'Galore Galah' (P. Spencer)

A visit to the picnic area via the Curly Heckendorf Dr. revealed a very dry habitat with no flowering. A Bearded Dragon and some Brown Treecreepers were observed.

A number of *Eremophilas* in the botanic section were still flowering and attracting native bees.

It was nice to be in an environment with which we are less familiar - another enjoyable Field Naturalist outing.

Birdlist – Galore Hill Reserve (Phillip Seely)	
Brown Songlark	Pink & Grey Galah
Brown Tree-creeper	Red-rumped Parrots
Dusky Woodswallow	Rainbow Bee-eater
Grey-crowned Babbler	Rec-capped Robin
Grey Fantail	Rufous Whistler
Grey Shrike Thrush	Sacred Kingfisher
Kookaburra	Speckled Warbler
Masked Woodswallow	Southern Whiteface
Mistletoe Bird	Weebill
Magpie	White-plumed Honeyeater
Noisy Miner	White-winged Chough
Peaceful Dove	White-browed Woodswallow
Total = 24	

MT BIG BEN

10th November, 2018

11 Members participated in this outing which commenced with a stop at the Swainsona Reserve, Felltimber Creek Rd. Wodonga to look at the flowering *Swainsona galegifolia* (see cover photo). We then proceeded to Mt Big Ben driving to the top at the towers and then working our way down.



Showy Violet (white form)
(*V. bentonicifolia*) - R. Andrews



Common Bird Orchid
(*C. valida*) – P. Spencer

It was quite chilly at the top which is around 1150 m in altitude, with the predominant tree a tall form of *Eucalyptus pauciflora* (Snow Gum). The understory around the towers had been removed and this had resulted in carpets of Showy Violets (*Viola betonicifolia*) and Common Bird-orchids (*Chiloglottis valida*).

As we descended, colour was provided by bright patches of Pink Bells (*Tetralochea ciliata*) and Hop Bitter-pea (*Daviesia latifolia*). An occasional Dainty Bird-orchid (*Chiloglottis trapeziformis*) and Mountain Hood-orchid (*Caladenia alpina*) were found and near the creek the Hazel Pomaderris (*Pomaderris aspera*) was in full flower attracting 4 or more pollinators including both the European Honey Bee and native bees.



Hazel Pomaderris (*Pomaderris aspera*) – N. Blair

On the way home Jan and Jenny invited us to their property at Allan’s Flat. It is a cattle property in a spectacular setting. Until recently Jan and Jenny ran the Sandy Creek Native Nursery on the property and their native garden is an absolute delight with its profusion of plants and birds and water features.

Neil Blair



Australian Pipit (Photo P Spencer)

Birdlist – Mt Big Ben, Nov 2018 (Phillip Seely)		
Fell Timber Ck Rd/ Swainsonia Res.	Mt Big Ben	Jan & Jenny’s, Allan’s Flat
Grey Fantail	Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike)	Australian Pipit
Leaden Flycatcher	Brown Thornbill	House Sparrow
Rufous Whistler	Eastern Spinebill	Dusky Woodswallow
Sacred Kingfisher	Grey Shrike-thrush	Gold Finch
Satin Bowerbird	Kookaburra	New-holland Honeyeater
	Magpie	Noisy Friarbird
	Pied Currawong	Rainbow Bee-eater
	Red Wattlebird	Superb Fairy Wren
	Sacred Kingfisher	Wedge-tailed eagle
	Spotted Pardalote	Welcome Swallow
	Striated Pardalote	
	Superb Fairy Wren	White-plumed Honeyeater
	Wedge-tailed eagle(?)	
	White-throated Treecreeper	
Total = 27		

Happily the weather moderated enough for about 9 members to venture into the Mt Stanley Scenic Reserve. On a cool dry day with little wind, we started at Lake Kerford, Beechwork Historical Park. Here birds were the main attraction (apart from the presiding Koala at the carpark) and included a Red-browed Treecreeper, as also sighted here last year. The upper storey Eucalypts were noted as mainly Narrow-leaf Peppermints (*E. robertsonii*), with Mountain Swamp Gums (*E. camphora* subsp *humeana*), Blue Gums (*E. globulus* subsp *bicostata*), Candlebarks (*E. rubida*) and some Manna Gums (*E. viminalis*)

Most flowering was finishing, *Clematis aristata* being a noteworthy exception and some Bird Orchids with seeds were seen. Interestingly, the seeds form close to the ground & are elevated as the stem grows upward.



Common Bird Orchid with developing seed
(Photo – R. Andrews)

We then went on to Stanley via Fletchers Dam where little was added. After lunch at Upper ‘Spring Ditch’ Dam & being entertained by a variety of ducklings, we headed to Circular Creek Road where a report of a Cicada Bird sighting had been made. No luck this trip though. – Apple Berry (*Billardiera scandens*) was seen in flower and the Hazel Pomaderris, in flower at Mt Big Ben previously was not as advanced here. We also saw a variety of ‘Daisies’ in flower – easy to recognise the Family – not so easy to identify further (especially with my photos!)



Oleara sp.



Brachyscome spp.



Brown Thornbill (P. Spencer)



Cinnamon Bells



Wolf Spider & egg sac (R. Andrews)

However, we discovered some interesting plants in a more open area, accessed from Bald Hill East Track. This included a variety of orchids – Tiger, Cinnamon Bells and Hyacinth..... and a Wolf Spider. A varied & interesting day in a ‘new’ location – thank you Neil for ‘walking’ us through our finds.

Gail Steed

Birdlist – Stanley area, Nov 2018 (Phillip Seely)		
Lake Kerford / Fletchers Dam	Springditch Dam	Circular Creek Rd
Blackbird	Blackbird	Crested Shrike-tit
Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike	Black Duck (& ducklings)	Golden Whistler
Brown Thornbill	Eurasian Coot	Nankeen Kestral
Crimson Rosella	King Parrot	Whip Bird
Eurasian Coot	Grey Fantail	
Fantail Cuckoo	Masked Lapwing	
Grey Fantail	New Holland Honeyeater	
Grey Shrike-thrush	Red Wattlebird	
Grey Teal	Rufous Whistler	
Kookaburra	White Ibis	
Little Pied Cormorant	Wood Duck (& ducklings)	
Magpie		
Olive-backed Oriole		
Pied Currawong		
Pink & Grey Galah		
Red-browed Treecreeper		
Red Wattlebird		
Rufous Whistler		*
Sacred Kingfisher		
Shining Bronze Cuckoo		
Spotted Pardalote		
Striated Pardalote		
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo		
Superb Fairy Wren		
Swamp Hen		
Welcome Swallow		
White-browed Scrub Wren		
White-throated Gerygone		
White Ibis		
White-plumed Honeyeater		
White-throated Treecreeper		
Wood Duck		
Yellow-faced Honeyeater		
Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo		
Yellow Robin		
Total = 45		

Upcoming Outings – Summer 2018/19

~ 7th – 9th December – Mt Buffalo Caravan Park; Completed, refer next newsletter.

~ 7th – 10th January – Falls Creek; Completed, refer next newsletter.

~ 8th February, 2019 – AGM. 7pm Wonga Wetlands; Completed, refer next newsletter.

~ 9th February, 2019 – West Albury Wetlands; 8:30 am.

~ 22nd February – Wonga Wetlands; 8:30 am, Wonga Wetlands carpark.

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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