

# THE FIELD NATURALIST

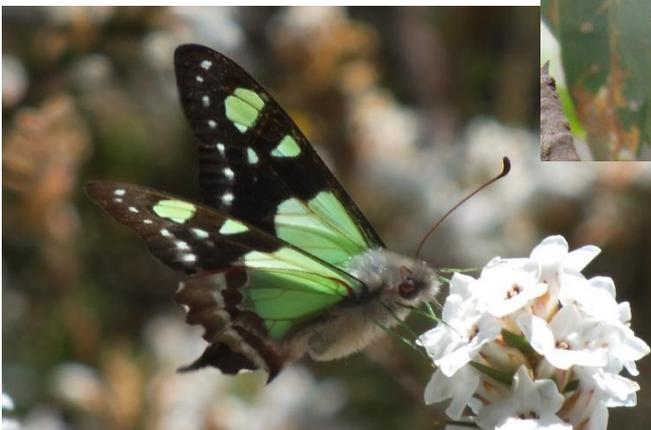
NEWSLETTER NO. 127: January, 2016

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



Yellow-footed Antechinus:  
September, Chiltern – Mt Pilot NP  
(Photo – R Andrews)

Fuscous Honeyeater:  
September, Chiltern –Mt Pilot NP  
(Photo – R Andrews)



Unidentified butterfly: December – Mt Buffalo NP  
(Photo – P Spencer)

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

Our wet Spring did mean some changes to the 2016 schedule but provided enormous variety & has set us up for an interesting, rich and diverse 2017. Thank you everyone for your contributions to our club and its outings.

**CHILTERN / MT PILOT NP**

**11<sup>th</sup> September, 2016**

**Riley's Rd., Bartley's Track, Honeyeater picnic ground, Donchi Hill Rd.**

11 members visited the Chiltern section of the National Park to look at the ground flora with the main focus on orchids. The weather was fine and sunny in the morning but a heavy cloud cover in the afternoon made bird watching against a bright, grey sky a little difficult. [The overcast conditions must have suited the yellow-footed Antechinus however, as she scuttled openly up & down the tree collecting fresh nesting material and pausing only for photographs and to clean & tidy herself]. The Park was beautiful as Spring had sprung and the orchids were plentiful in response to the late winter and spring rains.

We spent time on 10 orchid species: 4 Greenhoods – *Pterostylis nana* (Dwarf Greenhood), *P. curta* (Blunt Greenhood), *P. nutans* (Nodding Greenhood), *P. pedunculata* (Maroonhood); 4 Caladenias – *Caladenia fuscata* (Dusky Fingers), *Caladenia carnea* (Pink Fingers), *Cyanicula caerulea* (Blue Fairy), *Pheladenia difformis* (Bluebeard Orchid); as well as *Diuris pardina* (Leopard Orchid) and *Glossodia major* (Wax-lip Orchid).



*Caladenia fuscata*



*C. carnea*



*Cyanicula caerulea*

We also looked at how to distinguish between 2 species of Drosera: *D. peltata* (Pale Sundew) and *D. auriculata* (Tall Sundew) –see article page 10, and between male and female *Wurmbia dioica* (Common Early Nancy) flowers.



Male flower

Female flower

[Individual plants are generally male or female (dioecious) but 3-8% are cosexual]

The birds were active and vocal and 33 species were identified.

It was noted that 7 species of Honeyeater and Little Lorikeets were enjoying the flowering White Box, the Robins were leaving and the Cuckoos arriving. The only water site we visited was over lunch at Cyanide Dam so waterbirds were largely absent from the count.

**Neil Blair (article & photos)**

The bird list for the day was:

Australian Grebe	Olive-backed Oriole (h)
Australian Magpie	Pallid Cuckoo (h)
Australian Raven	Peaceful Dove (h)
Black-chinned Honeyeater	Pelican
Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike	Red Wattlebird
Brown-hooded Honeyeater	Superb Fairy Wren
Brown Treecreeper	Varied Sitella
Dusky Woodswallow	Weebill (h)
Fantail Cuckoo	White Ibis
Fuscous Honeyeater	White-naped Honeyeater
Golden Whistler (h)	White-throated Treecreeper
Grey Shrike-thrush	White-winged Chough
Laughing Kookaburra	Willie Wagtail
Little Lorikeet	Yellow Robin
Little Pied Cormorant	Yellow Thornbill
Mistletoe Bird	Yellow-tufted Honeyeater
Noisy Friarbird	

### Phillip Seely

#### WOOMARGAMA NP

19<sup>th</sup> September, 2016

4 members left Albury in sunny but cool weather after heavy rain the previous day. We started the Hume and Hovell walk from Tunnel Road, covered in low cloud that rose soon after, leaving a cloudy, cold morning walk. The area was recovering from bushfires and it was noted that the flowering season was 3 – 4 weeks behind Albury/Chiltern. Flowering Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*) provided colour amongst the burnt eucalypts which were showing both basal and epicormic regrowth. Handsome Flat-pea (*Platylobium montanum*), Grey Guinea-flower (*Hibbertia obtusifolia*) and Urn Heath (*Melichrus urceolata*) were in flower and Common Hovea (*Hovea heterophylla*) and Purple Coral-pea (*Hardenbergia violacea* – see picture) provided groundcover colour.



Cockatoos were plentiful with Sulphur-crested and Gang-gangs seen and Yellow-tailed heard. Amongst the larger insectivores were Grey-shrike Thrush, Rufous and Golden Whistlers, Yellow Robins and amongst the smaller insectivores were Thornbills (Yellow, Brown and Buff-rumped) and Pardalotes (Spotted and Striated).

The highlight of the day was when we moved to the Samuel Bollard Camping area amongst unburnt Peppermints and Gums with a Cassinia understory and witnessed close-up a flock of 10+ Shining Bronze Cuckoos, 5+ Fan-tailed Cuckoos and 2+ Olive-backed Orioles feasting on a caterpillar infestation on the leaves of the Peppermints. Intermittent patches of sunlight highlighted their brilliant colours. At the campsite a male and female Scarlet Robin, a female Golden Whistler and a White-throated Treecreeper kept us entertained as they took turns to drink and bathe in a puddle on the track, whilst a pair of Gang-gangs kept dropping half-eaten, green gumnuts all around us.

The bird list for the day was 27 species (see over for details).

Woomargama NP bird list:

Rufous Whistler	Shining Bronze-Cuckoo
Grey Shrike-thrush	Australian Raven
Gang-gang	Grey Fantail
Yellow Thornbill	White-naped Honeyeater
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Black Duck
Crimson Rosella	Pied Currawong
Yellow Robin	Superb Fairy-wren
Kookaburra	Olive-backed Oriole
Buff-rumped Thornbill	Golden Whistler
Brown Thornbill	Brown-headed Honeyeater
Spotted Pardalote	White-throated Treecreeper
Striated Pardalote	Scarlet Robin
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Golden Whistler
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	

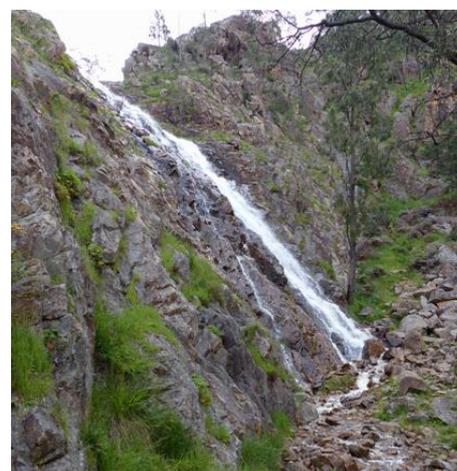
**Neil Blair (article, photos & bird list)**

**WARBY RANGE STATE PARK**

24<sup>th</sup> September, 2016

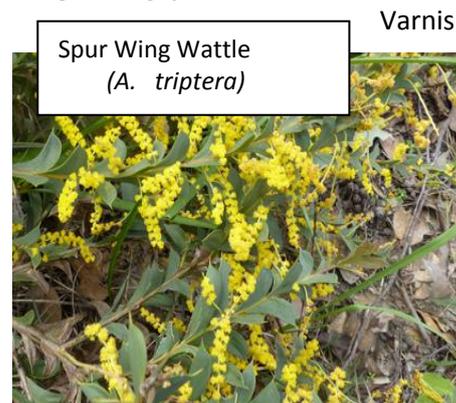
10 members and 2 guests travelled to the Warby Ranges section of the Park, in cool but fine weather, visiting a soggy Wenhams Camp, Ryans Lookout and Briens Gorge Falls.

Wenhams Camp has a dry sclerophyll forest with an overstory of Red Stringybark (*Eucalyptus macrorhyncha*), Blakely's Red Gum (*E. blakelyi*), Long-leaved Box (*E. goniocalyx*) and tree size Red-stemmed Wattle (*Acacia rubida*); an good understory with the endemic Spur-wing Wattle (*A. triptera*) (see picture below), Vanish Wattle (*A. verniciflua*) and lovely Grey Grass Trees (*Xanthorrhoea glauca* subsp. *angustifolia*) (Photo - S Jacovac).



Amongst the groundcover, 5 orchid species were found (2 *Diuris* and 3 *Pterostylis*) – Leopard Orchid (*D. pardina*), Golden Moth Orchid (*D. chryseopsis*), Nodding Greenhood (*P. nutans*), Blunt Greenhood (*P. curta*), Midget Greenhood (*P. mutica*). Also noted were flowering Scarlet Sundews (*Drosera glanduligera*) (see article pg 10), the monocotyledon "lilies" – Yellow Stars (*Hypoxis vaginata* and *glabella*), Early Nancy (*Wurmbea dioica*), Bulbine Lilly (*Bulbine bulbosa*). The native Geranium, (*Geranium solanderi*) was compared to the weedy Big Heron's-bill (*Erodium botrys*).

At Ryans Lookout the understory was more diverse including Grey Guinea-flower (*Hibbertia obtusifolia*), Austral Indigo (*Indigofera australis*), Common Fringe-myrtle (*Calytrix tetragona*), Wattle, Spur-wing Wattle (*Acacia triptera* - endemic to NSW & Qld



but isolated to Warby Range in Victoria), (Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*), Prickly Parrot-pea (*Dillwynia juniperina*) and Flat-leaf Bush-pea (*Pultenaea platyphylla*). The highlight at Briens Gorge Falls was the sighting of Northern Sandalwood (*Santalum lanceolatum*) with a habit form when seen in the distance not unlike the Weeping Willow but found in the drier hill country.

Butterflies were coming out and The Painted Lady, Yellow Admiral and a *Xenica* sp. were noted.



Yellow Admiral Butterfly  
(*Vanessa itea*)

A Flower Wasp was found on the Varnish Wattle and 35 species of birds were found with the highlights being Liz's sighting of the Speckled Warbler at Ryans Lookout and hearing the calls of the Brown Treecreeper and the White-throated Treecreeper at the same time, allowing for comparisons to be made.



Flower Wasp (Scoliidae)

Neil Blair (article & photos – except as noted)

The Bird List for the day was:

Australian Raven	Red Wattlebird
Brown Goshawk	Rufous Whistler
Brown-headed Honeyeater	Silvereye
Brown Thornbill	Speckled Warbler
Brown Treecreeper	Spotted Pardalote
Buff-rumped Thornbill	Striated Pardalote
Crimson Rosella	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
Eastern Shrike-tit	Superb Blue Wren
Galah	Weebill
Gang Gang	Western Gerygone
Grey Butcherbird	White-plumed Honeyeater
Grey Fantail	White-throated Treecreeper
Grey Shrike-thrush	White-winged Chough
Jacky Winter	White-winged Triller
Kookaburra	Willy Wagtail
Magpie	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Magpie-lark	Yellow Robin
Pied Currawong	

Bernie Datson

### CHILTERN / MT PILOT NP

9<sup>th</sup> October, 2016

#### Depot Rd, Tuans Tk, Honeyeater Picnic Area, Tower Hill

The very wet spring redirected this visit to drier ground (on the western side of the park) than originally planned. Flowers, notably lilies, orchids & peas, insects and some remaining fungi provided plenty of diversity for the group. Neil drew the attention of all with the discovery of a 'spittle bug' on a Golden Everlasting (*Xerochrysum bracteatum*). A Leaf Hopper nymph, after emerging from eggs laid in plant tissue, is located inside a mass of protective frothy bubbles it secretes.



An empty 'cut moth' casing

Tiger and Leopard orchids were finished, but other orchid favourites seen included the Flying Duck, Bearded Orchids, Hooded Caladenias, Dusky Caladenias, Pink Fingers, Nodding, Blunt & Maroon Greenhoods. (and, oh yes, giant mosquitoes!)



**Flying Duck Orchid** (*Caleana major*); **Hover Fly on Yam Daisy** (*Microseris walteri*); **Thallose liverwort** (*Asterella drumondii*)  
(Photos D Andrews)



**Red Slime Mould** (*Tubifera ferruginosa*);

*Russula iterika*



**Trigger Plant**  
(*Stylidium graminifolium*)

**Western Golden Tip**  
(*Goodia medicaginae*)

**Common Wedge Pea (& friend)**  
(*Gompholobium huegelii*)

Thirteen km from Lockhart, Galore Hill is an impressive landmark with panoramic views of a reserve that covers over 500 hectares of well-maintained bushwalking tracks & bushland. According to folklore, in 1847 Henry Osborne (on his way from Wollongong to Adelaide, climbed this hill and exclaimed “There’s land enough and galore for me”

This was a new direction for many of us although familiar territory for Phillip. It is an open Box Woodland, with Grey Box dominant in the lower areas and Blakely’s Red Gum, Kurrajong and Drooping She-Oak on the upper slopes and ridges.

It was dry but very windy, making bird viewing a bit tricky, although the count was about 35. Glenda & Bernie had done a lot of preparatory work to make it a really informative day - with the excitement added of a possible sighting of a Southern Whiteface. On the way to the summit we inspected the arboretum area established here 40 years ago, and found some stunning (although not often indigenous) plants and *Eremophila* species galore!



*Eucalyptus macrocarpa* is a very distinctive species having a mallee-type habit of growth and spectacular red flowers.



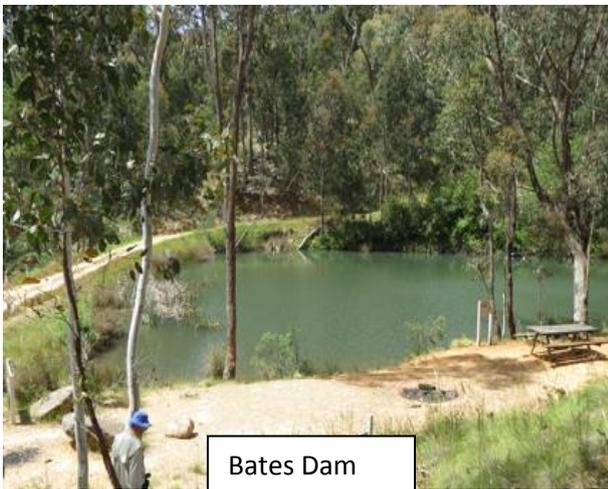
Bulbine lily (*Bulbine bulbosa*)

Thanks, Bernie & Glenda – new, enjoyable & very interesting.

Apologies here; my notes weren't taken in their correct book, so have gone AWOL.....and my memory has been missing for even longer, so only sketchy information is provided! It was a pleasant Spring day as we drove through Stanley – pausing in town to view a large old cork tree possibly planted by Baron Sir Ferdinand von Mueller – en-route to morning tea and a meander alongside a revegetated dam and gully walk. (Spring Ditch Reserve?) We walked amongst Eucalypt trees (Blue Gums & Swamp Gums), Cassinia and Pomaderris shrubs and located a very obliging Common Bronze wing (*Phaps chalcoptera*, see photo – D. Andrews).



We moved on, via Murrumgee Lookout, to Bates Dam, where unidentified damselflies flew at the water's edge & relics of the Six Mile Creek goldfield remain nearby.



Bates Dam



Relic (on right) -12 foot vertical boiler, originally used to power hydraulic sluicing equipment



(Damselflies: Photos – R Andrews)

Twelve members and a visitor met at Porepunkah, before heading up the mountain to Rocky Creek Track and numerous wildflowers. Lunch at Lake Catani was followed by a short walk on which butterflies were the highlight. Judging by Peter & Dick's photos, the final outing of 2016 was pleasant and informative – a good way to finish 2016.



Alpine Baeckea (*B gunniana*)



Alpine Caladenia (*C alapina*)



Royal Grevillea (*G victoriae*);



Bushy Needlewood Hakea, with open seed pods (*H decurrens*)



White Eared Honeyeater (*Lichenostemus leucotis*)



unknown fuzzy red stuff (any suggestions?)



Painted Jezebel (*Delias aganippe*)



### Drosera sp – Sundews

*Drosera* is a genus of carnivorous plants containing approx. 200 species occupying temperate and tropical habitats throughout the world. Sundews are so-named because of the sticky, glandular hairs which cover its leaves and glisten like dew in the sun. The mechanism is slow, with its leaves eventually curling up from the edges to enclose its trapped prey.

Darwin found the genus fascinating and studied, cultivated & experimented with these plants which he later described in almost 300 pages in his book on insectivorous plants.

About a dozen *Drosera* species have been described in Victoria – three of which, *D. auriculata*, *D. glanduligera* and *D. peltata*, were noted during our Spring outings.

***D. glanduligera*** (Scarlet or Pimpernel Sundew) is readily identified by its orange flower and low habit.



It is a widespread annual and prefers drier conditions than most other Victorian *Drosera*, growing from winter to late spring. According to the Victorian Carnivorous Plant Society website, it is also more dependent on its insectivorous diet than most other carnivorous plants.

This specimen was photographed by Neil near Wenhams Camp at Warby Range outing

Both *D. auriculata* & *D. peltata* can be quite tall with white flowers and basal rosettes. In flower, they are generally distinguished by the presence/absence of hairs on the sepals. *D. auriculata* also has a distinguishing cylindrical seed. Both are tuberous Droseras, but are not often found together –

*D. peltata* is mainly found near water and is less common in Victoria



*D. peltata* – hairy sepals  
(Photo – N Blair)



*D. auriculata* – smooth sepals  
(Photo – N Blair)

### **Upcoming Outings - Summer**

#### **Jan 16<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup>: Falls Creek –**

Escape some heat for a few days to a cooler environment....(this was previously planned to be Mt Hotham but has been rescheduled due to unavailability)

#### **Jan 28<sup>th</sup> Wonga Wetlands (8 am, Waterview Rd end) –**

An early start to beat the heat and still catch the great range of water birds to be found here.

#### **Feb 10<sup>th</sup> AGM – 7 pm, Wonga Wetlands**

Bring small supper to share

#### **Feb 10<sup>th</sup> – West Albury Wetlands (4 pm, BYO BBQ)**

An evening outing to catch-up in the cool..... water birds & who knows what else – Platypus??

*These are the final published outing details to end Feb 2017 - stay tuned for the new listing and confirm outing details in Saturday's Border Morning Mail.*

*Contact the outing leader in the week prior if you need a lift.*