



Imperial Jezebel chrysalises - over-wintering and emerging (Jan Palmer)



Caper White (P Seely)



Unknown Fly on Common Fringe-myrtle (P Spencer)



Common Brown (R Andrews)

**Winter/Summer Issue,
2021/22:**

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

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It is membership renewal time - see details below for subscription payment. The program for the first part of the year is nearly complete and will be circulated as soon as it is finalised.

*Meanwhile, see you at Kremur St. on the evening of 26 February.*

**Direct Transfer details for electronic subscription payments -**

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

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AWFNC Presidents Report 2022

11 Feb 2022

2021 was a hard year for the AWFN Club with the many lockdowns and the uncertainty of the times due to the COVID pandemic.

It was heartening however to see so many members at a wonderful day in the spring, led by Neil Blair [in the Chiltern NP]. We saw many wildflowers and in one spot near the Chiltern-Yackandandah Road, we saw a large number of Sun Orchids

On behalf of the club, I wish to thank Veronica for her sterling and efficient work as Secretary of the club. I also wish to thank David Bird for his work as Treasurer.

I also want to thank Gail Steed for her excellent newsletter that she had put out in 2021. It must have been tough because we did not have many outings with subsequent information to send on to Gail for the newsletter.

I also want especially to thank Jan and Jenny for letting us come to their farm for the end of year Christmas function. Wasn't it beaut to see Eileen Collins at the get-together?

I conclude by hoping that 2022 be a more settled year for the 'field nats' and we have more excursions than last year.

[On a rather sad (well for us anyway!) note, 2022 sees the stepping back of two long-committed executive committee members – our Secretary, Veronica & Treasurer, David.

Twenty-eight amazing, generous years between them! We look forward to seeing them at outingsrelaxed and enjoying activities with the group they have loved & supported all these years.]

OUTINGS

KENTUCKY AREA

13th June 2021

Very cool and cloudy at Kentucky.

Highlights were noted as Hooded Robins, Red-capped Robins and a Golden Whistler, as well as the Babblers and Apostle Birds often seen in this area.

Dick also managed to find some interesting fungi (see page 3).



Hooded Robin - female (J Palmer)



Stalked Puffball



Fungal twins



Pycnoporus coccineus



Bird's-nest fungi (*Crucibulum laeve*)



Fungus on scat

(R Andrews)

Bird list, Kentucky

13/06/21

Apostle Bird	Honeyeater White-naped	Robin Hooded
Babbler Grey-crowned	Ibis Australian White	Robin Red-capped
Babbler White-browed	Kookaburra Laughing	Rosella Crimson
Chough White-winged	Magpie Australian	Shrike-thrush Grey
Cuckoo Shrike Black-faced	Magpie-lark	Sparrowhawk collared
Duck Maned (Wood)	Pardalote Spotted	Thornbill Yellow
Fairy-wren Superb	Pigeon Crested	Treecreeper Brown
Galah	Raven Australian	Whistler Australian Golden

TOTAL = 24

Bernard Datson

SANDY CREEK & LOCKHART'S GAP

26th June 2021

Terrible foggy day at Lockharts's Gap but, as often, Platypuses were glimpsed at the dam.

Dick again had his fungi-spotting glasses on & provided the following photos and identifications



Mycena Cystidiosa?



Coral fungus



Earth Tongues
(*Geoglossum sp*)



Unidentified fungus in moss



Woolly Grevillea

Bird list, Sandy Creek/Lockhart's Gap (including Platypus Lake, and sites between)

26/06/21

Note: *Bernie* stayed on the lower regions of the district after the others had gone and checked out the flooded farm dams; his list grew considerably.

Blackbird Common	Fantail Grey	Lapwing Masked	Shelduck Australian
Bowerbird Satin	Finch Red-browed	Magpie Australian	Shrike-thrush Grey
Chough White-winged	Galah	Magpie-lark	Starling common
Cockatoo Sulphur-crested	Grebe Australasian	Parrot Australian King	Swallow Welcome
Coot Eurasian	Heron White-faced	Pigeon Crested	Swamphen Australasian
Cormorant Great	Honeyeater Fuscous	Raven Australian	Swan Black
Cormorant Little Pied	Honeyeater White-plumed	Robin Eastern Yellow	Thornbill Brown
Currawong Pied	Ibis Australian White	Rosella Crimson	Treecreeper Brown
Duck Maned (Wood)	Ibis Straw-necked	Rosella Yellow (ssp)	Treecreeper White -throated
Duck Pacific Black	Kite Whistling	Scrubwren white-browed	Wagtail Willie
Fairy-wren Superb	Kookaburra Laughing		Wattlebird Red

Total = 43

Bernard Datson

AWFN Newsletter

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JINDERA – Bush Stone-curlew Conservation & Pub Lunch

11th July, 2021

On a beautiful winter's day, Nev & Jan Lubke generously shared their experience of the Nature Conservation Working Group (NCWG) Bush Stone-curlew project. It was clear that their passion, tenacity & good-humoured common sense helped drive the project's success.

NCWG were the first organisation to successfully reintroduce young captive-bred stone-curlews to supplement declining wild populations. Between 2008 and 2015, a total of 85 young birds were released in 8 annual releases in southern NSW.

Some of the fascinating information I recall:

- The chicks are totally dependent for 55 days
- The previously accepted mortality of any second chicks was found to be related to its inability to get enough food in the short periods chicks emerged from the protection and incubation of the parent. Nev and Jan could then help overcome this issue with vigilance & hard boiled eggs.
- Bred chicks need to be walked, or will develop splayed legs!



The group listening & looking.



The star of the show, a Bush Stone Curlew (P Spencer)

Such a fascinating precursor to lunch. Many thanks to Nev & Jan.

Gail Steed

CHILTERN NP – Wildflower Walk

23rd October, 2021

Around 20 members and guests braved a rainy start to the day before enjoying fine weather for the bush walk. Swathes of Sticky Everlastings (*Xerochrysum viscosum*) and Chocolate Lilies (*Arthropodium strictum*) were a feature driving through the Park. Our main walk was on Tower Hill which was still in good flower.

The flowering shrubby understory included Diggers Speedwell (*Veronica perfoliata*), Mountain Grevillea (*Grevillea alpina*), Common Fringe-myrtle (*Calytrix tetragona*), Erect and Grey Guinea-flowers (*Hibbertia riparia* and *obtusifolia*), Daphne Heath (*Brachyloma daphnoides*) and a variety of pea flowers including Showy Parrot-pea (*Dillwynia sericea*) and Common Wedge-pea (*Gompholobium huegelii*).



Narrow-leafed Bitter Pea (*Daviesia leptophylla*)



Chocolate Lily (*Arthropodium strictum*) (P Spencer)

The flowering ground cover included the Grass Triggerplant (*Stylidium graminifolium*), Chocolate Lily (*Arthropodium strictum*) and the Twining Fringe Lily (*Thysanotus patersonii*), but the feature of the day was the display of orchids – Hooded Caladenia (*Caladenia cucullata*), Pink Fingers (*Caladenia carnea*), Purplish Beard-orchid (*Calochilus robertsonii*), Large Duck-orchid (*Caleana major*), a Blue Sun-orchid (*Thelymitra juncifolia*), Slender Sun-orchid (*Thelymitra pauciflora*) and the Salmon Sun-orchid (*Thelymitra rubra*).



Large Duck-orchid (P Spencer)



Slender Sun-orchid (P Spencer)



Dotted Sun-orchid (P Spencer)



Salmon Sun-orchid (P Spencer)

After lunch we visited a large patch of Austral Bugle (*Ajuga australis*) and Podolepis (*Podolepis decipiens* 'ex jaceoides') before proceeding to an eastern part of the Park which was regenerating naturally after the Barnawartha fire several years ago. Western Golden-tip (*Goodia medicaginea*) was one of the plants that appeared post-fire and was now in decline. We found a remnant patch that was in late flower/early pod stage.



(D Andrews)



(P Spencer)

Western Golden-tip
(*Goodia medicaginea*)

Neil Blair

ROWDY FLAT WALK & CHRISTMAS LUNCH

4th December, 2021

The discovery of alluvial gold in 1852 saw thousands of miners rush to the Yackandandah area. Tent towns sprang up along Yackandandah Creek from Staghorn, Allan's, Osborne and Rowdy Flats, through present-day Yackandandah, and up to the Junction. The legacy of the gold rush remains today in the well-preserved buildings, tail races, dredge holes, mine shafts and relics dotted along creeks and through the surrounding countryside.

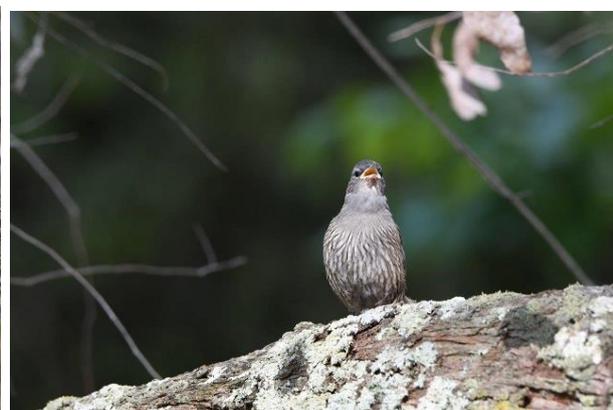
A bike/walk track has just been completed along the Yackandandah Creek Recreation Reserve, starting at the Osbornes Flat Hall, through Yackandandah, and then following the original rail track from Yackandandah Station Site and finishing at Beechworth. Good birding opportunities can be found in the stretch along the Creek from Mongans Lane, off Racecourse Road, to Ridgeway Reserve with Yellow Robins, Tufted Honeyeaters, Babblers, Wrens, Treecreepers, and Scrub Wrens in abundance. Gang-gangs are often seen enjoying Hawthorn berries when in season.



Walkway bridge over 'Yack' creek, on way to Ridgeway's Flat (J Palmer)



White-browed Babblers (J Palmer)



Juvenile Tree-creeper (J Palmer)



White-naped Honeyeater (P Spencer)



Yellow Robin (J Palmer)



Eastern Whipbird (P Spencer)

Gap Flat – Christmas lunch



This year Jenny and I joined the Birds on Farms Bird Survey. Surveys are carried out 4 times per year at 4 sites on our property. Bernie and Glenda Datson have been joining us on these surveys. We're looking forward to recording an increase in the species and numbers over the next few years, as we continue our re-vegetation works, linking existing remnants and plantations on our 840 acres. Notable species observed to date include the Spotted Quail Thrush, Speckled Warbler, Double-barred Finch Diamond Firetail, Southern Whiteface and Barking Owl.

Jan Palmer



Welcome Swallow on nest (P Spencer)



Superb Fairy Wren (R Andrews)



This mystery bird captured at Jan & Jenny's by Peter Spencer, had many minds hard at work to identify it. Thanks to Phillip, Jan, Jenny, Bernard, Glenda, Eileen & Chris Tzaros: the solution – a Jacky Winter!

ARTICLES

Rock Ferns

Rock Ferns pick up in the winter and are generally seen on our outings. There are 3 species in our area;

- *Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia* – Rock Fern
- *Cheilanthes sieberi* subsp. *sieberi* – Narrow Rock-fern
- *Cheilanthes distans* – Bristly Cloak-fern

Rock Fern and Narrow Rock-fern are quite common and maybe seen on most of our outings. They may appear together but the Narrow Rock Fern prefers drier, shallower soils.

Cheilanthes distans is uncommon and rarely seen unless searched for (see pictures on Friends of Chiltern Mt Pilot website).

Below are some photos highlighting differences that may help in identification.

1. *Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia* - **Rock Fern**; commonly close and clustered; green lamina of frond usually broadly triangular in overall shape and pinnae relatively close along stem.



Pinnules, shallowly lobed

2. *Cheilanthes sieberi* subsp. *sieberi* – **Narrow Rock-fern**; less compact and clustered, less obvious. Green lamina of frond usually narrow oblong in shape and pinnae further separated along stem.



Pinnules deeply lobed

Neil Blair

MEMBER'S ACTIVITIES & PHOTOS

1. Elusive Elbow Orchid



On January 16, 2022 Neil and Stephanie were meandering at Mt. Buffalo and after 11 years of searching for the dainty Elbow Orchid (*Thynniorchis huntiana*), Stephanie found it. She had been hunting for it to complete a personal collection.

“It was a joyful event and it will be eternalised on the canvas in due time.”

Stephanie’s work depicts the beautiful flora around us and was recently part of a Canberra exhibition at the National Botanical Gardens.

The executive director of science at Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Professor David Cantrill, noted that the Elbow Orchid has a very complex but clever pollination system. It imitates the flightless female wasp sitting on a blade of grass to attract pollinators.



He said it also relies on fungi to germinate its seeds and grow, so believes they are a great indicator of environmental health

[How exciting. Great spotting!]

2. Who Stole That Egg?

Eggs missing from a carton of eggs left on a back veranda in East Albury.....

Fortunately the thief was caught in the act. The victim watched fascinated as an Australian Raven worked out how to open the box and took off with an egg. He took this photo of the dark, handsome thief (in case you should see him).



John Shepherd

John has been keeping very busy and managed to get to Tarcutta Hills Reserve (belonging to Bush Heritage) to do the winter atlas surveys. He 'atlassed' 6 2ha sites out of ten before he was locked down again. The most interesting birds were a pair of nesting Southern Whitefaces going in and out of a hole in a dead tree, Red-capped Robins, Flame Robins, Brown Treecreepers and Speckled Warblers. Bush Heritage officers and volunteers have been planting shrubs all winter. They are planning to bring in a team of goats to deal with the blackberries.

[We look forward to your next report, John]

3. Birds of West Albury (P Seely)



Koel



Tawny Frogmouths



Rainbow Lorikeet

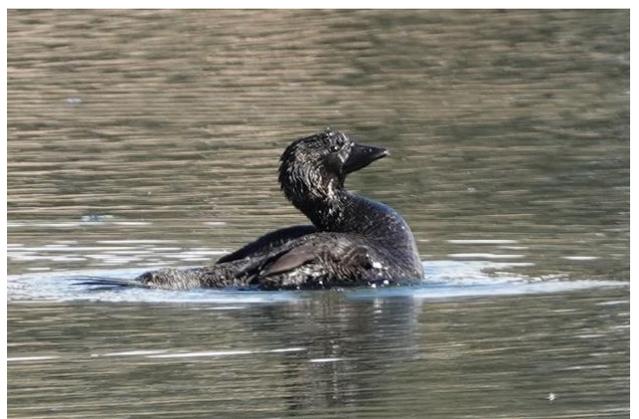


Reed Warbler

4. Water Birds (P Spencer)



Black Swan - Wonga Wetlands



Musk Duck - Wonga Wetlands



Whistling Kite nest with egg - Wonga Wetlands



Caspian Tern at Hume Dam wall

5. Cunningham's Skink (J Palmer)

After finding many Cunningham's skinks living in a rocky outcrop at the top of their place, and reading that they enjoyed seasonal fruit, Jan & Jenny tried them with some raspberries.



They loved them!

6. Garden Visitors (David Bird)



King Parrot pair

David & Barbara were delighted to have frequent, August morning visitors who come for a free feed of sunflower seeds.

7. Heavens

In these locked down times, some of our photographers turned their cameras skyward...



Lunar Eclipse (P Seeley)



Jupiter showing 4 of its largest moons (P Spencer)

ODD SPOT - The Times. June 16, 2021

Last year, a colony of rare, Mediterranean orchids was reported on a London city office rooftop.



(D Fenwick – NBN Atlas)

Serapias parviflora - the Small-flowered Tongue-orchid – was believed extinct in the UK and these 15 plants represent the entire known British colony of the species. It was previously found at Rame Head in Cornwall but disappeared in 2009.

They are thought to have been brought over by Saharan dust storms. Interestingly too, this rooftop is 'home' to 159 plant species (including London's largest colony of green-winged orchids) and 17 species of bee.

[Thank you Dick, for finding & sharing this article.]

Vale Jenny Shepherd

Last year we were shocked to learn of the sudden death of Jenny Shepherd, a loss made even harder by the COVID restrictions.

Her strength, knowledge & quiet presence are missed as we come to terms with her no longer attending our outings.

We extend our sympathy & wishes for peace to John & Susan

Next Outing

~ **26th February** – Kremur St. Boat Ramp Albury; 6 pm sharp. Contact Bernard Datson.

As previously noted, the upcoming program will be circulated soon & also made available via Friends of Chiltern website & Ecoportal.

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