



The Whistler

Newsletter of the Ringwood Field Naturalists Club Inc.

P.O. Box 418, Ringwood 3134
www.rfnc.org.au

Editor: Jack Airey
editor@rfnc.org.au

Reg. No. A9601
ABN 29 099 297 169

ISSN 2207-4333
Copyright © April 2023

Issue No. 55 – Apr 2023

From the Editor

What a 6 months of excursions and outings we've had! Back in September last year we headed to the Brisbane Ranges where we saw a plethora of orchids, and then later in the month we went to Corinella for a day of birding. October heralded the long-awaited Beechworth weekend away and it didn't disappoint, with heaps of birds and a good selection of orchids and other flowing plants. November was a let down with our planned outing to Crib Point cancelled after our leader (i.e. me) got COVID and was laid low.

In January we had the outdoor meeting at Jells Park which is always a good spot for birds. The post-meeting walk was a great success and dodged the heat of the day nicely. We've also visited Mt Baw Baw and Point Cook – exemplifying one of the goals of our program which is to go to places both high and low!

We've rounded out the activities with our autumn weekend away to Marysville, which showed that a shuffle in leaders and a day of total fire bans can't discourage our Club from having a good time in the bush. You can read the reports and see the photos from all our activities in this edition of the Whistler.

It's with a heavy heart that we said goodbye to a Club legend in October. Marion was one of the most wonderful people I've ever had the privilege of knowing, and we'll never forget her. Thanks Alison for putting together the tribute to her mum on the following pages. ❤️

Jack Airey
Editor



Our September visit to the Brisbane Ranges was a bit of a hike over the Westgate Bridge but worth it for the diversity and number of orchids we found. Here is a patch of Blue Fingers (*Caladenia caerulea*).

Contents	
From the Editor	1
Member News	2
Out and About	5
Member's Articles	20
Appendix - sighting lists	22



"... to further the study of Natural History in all its branches"

Member News

Welcome to our new members – Margaret Clarke, Jenny Williams and David Williams.

Vale – Marion King

04-07-1923 - 16-10-2022

Marion King passed away on 16 October at the age of 99.

Marion grew up on an apple orchard at Tyabb with her mother, father and brother Charles. She walked 2-3km across paddocks to get to primary school each day. This gave her a great love of native plants, and particularly orchids. It also gave her a love for poetry, as she would recite poems along her way. She and her girlfriends would go 'orchiding' on weekends.

Both an academic and sporty student at Frankston High School. She won multiple prizes at school and was Dux. She was a young student having skipped a couple of years, so repeated her last year at high school completing different subjects and doing well both years.

On graduating she became a student teacher at Hastings. After a year she decided it wasn't for her, moved to Melbourne, studied business and worked in the accounting department of an engineering firm. Here she met Dad (Bill) who was an engineer. Around this time her brother was killed in a RAAF plane crash at Point Cook, leaving her to be an only child.

Dad with Mum's help, built a house on land in South Warrandyte and at weekends looked after a cherry orchard which was to supplement their income. They raised a close family of 5 children - Alan, Robert, Margaret, Alison, and Jenny. Mum was a "stay at home" Mum, but found time to develop a love of gardening, knitting, cross stitch and photography. Later they started a native plant nursery called "Chalka", named after a tributary of the Murray that flows into Hattah Lakes.



A family gathering at Winneke (2019)



"... to further the study of Natural History in all its branches"

Mum, along with Dad, were great contributors to community life. Both were Founding members of Ringwood Photography group, Ringwood Field Naturalists Club (61 years), and Australian Plants Society - Maroondah (57 years).

She was active from the very start at North Ringwood Methodist (later Uniting) Church, having come from a long line of Methodist ministers. In later years, mum also loved her time down at Warrandyte State Park in the nursery, spending time with special friends and sharing her knowledge of plant growing.



"Must get that photo"



She and Dad were also very active in the South Warrandyte community, both on school committees and helped with getting the South Warrandyte Colman Reserve sports fields and tennis courts built. At one of South Warrandyte's fairs, Mum won the Ladies Wood Chopping event. Much to Dad's horror. (Men's work!)

Mum was a keen and talented tennis player and only on her 75th birthday said she would give up playing singles. She gave up tennis competition in her late 80's when she said she "ran out of partners".

Mum and Dad travelled extensively throughout Australia, sharing their love of nature and photography with anyone who travelled with them. This was also passed this on to all their children who are still involved in many ways with nature/plants/bird groups and have wonderful holiday experiences.



The Grampians (2011)



Kinglake (2020)



"... to further the study of Natural History in all its branches"

Mum was the inspiration for starting the Ringwood Field Naturalist Club. After attending VFNC in town for many years with Dad and good friend and fellow nature lover Jack Hyett, she suggested to them that they might see if there was any interest in starting a Club out in the Ringwood area. Inundated with people at the advertised meeting, they started a group in 1961. As they say, "history was made". Mum was extremely pleased and proud that the Club is still going strong all these years later.

Although Mum never became an Executive member of the Committee, she was a very active member at the Club:

- Foundation Member: 1961
- Life Member: 1998
- Committee: (23 years) 1987/88, 1988/89, 1989/90, 1990/91, 1991/92, 1992/93, 1993/94, 1994/95, 1995/96, 1996/97, 1997/98, 1998/99, 1999/00, 2000/01, 2001/02, 2002/03, 2003/04, 2004/05, 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10

Mum also assisted Bill with numerous talks to our group and other FNC's, leader of numerous excursions and camp outs.



Mum had an appreciation of native plants/orchids and animals and was a very keen birdwatcher. I am sure that many of you would have had her help in identifying plants, orchids and more. She was always willing to share her knowledge and had great patience in repeating the same information each month to those present.

She was always interested in what was going on in everyone's lives and had kind words for all. She loved her kisses and hugs from members of the Club.

We miss her very much.

By Alison Rogers



Out and About

Brisbane Ranges

Sunday 11th September 2022

Leaders: Alison & Peter Rogers

Seventeen members enjoyed a wonderful day around the Brisbane Ranges. After meeting in front of the Steiglitz Court House we spent a little time checking out the bush along the South Steiglitz Rd. Orchids were relatively abundant including *Diuris pardina* (Leopard Orchid) and *Caladenia caerulea* (Blue Caladenia). An interesting plant in flower was *Grevillea chrysophaea* (Golden Grevillea). The bird find of the day was brief glimpses of the Spotted Quail-thrush.



Grevillea chrysophaea (Golden Grevillea)



Spotted Quail-thrush

There were two more stops along the way to our lunch destination Stony Creek Picnic Area. At one stop *Acacia myrtifolia* clothed the bush in yellow with mini carpets of *Pterostylis nana* (Dwarf Greenhood) scattered around.

Following lunch, we stopped briefly along Switch Rd. The bush was again yellow with *Pultenaea scabra* (Rough Bush-pea) in full flower. Members enjoyed another wander along a track with an unusual plant found - *Styphelia fletcheri* subsp. *brevisejala* (Twin-flower Beard-heath).



There were a further three stops during the afternoon at various interesting areas. Orchids were again the main focus with some areas alive with *Acianthus caudatus* (Mayfly Orchid), *Corybas incurvus* (Slaty Helmet Orchid) and *Pterostylis nana* (Dwarf Greenhood). A particularly good find was *Caladenia concolor* (Crimson Spider Orchid).



Corybas incurvus (Slaty Helmet Orchid)



Caladenia concolor (Crimson Spider Orchid)

The day concluded with afternoon tea at the corner of Hut Rd and Steiglitz-Durridwarrah Rd.

By Alison & Peter Rogers



Corinella and Grantville

Sunday 25th September 2022

Leaders: Hazel & Alan Veevers

After a very wet excursion to this venue in 2021 it was great to return on a glorious sunny day. There were some good bird sightings from the carpark and in the cemetery including Striated Pardalotes nesting in a power pole, Dusky Woodswallows perched on gravestones and a Shining Bronze Cuckoo in a nearby tree. There were some nice spring flowers including Golden Moth Orchids, Grass Trigger Plants, Kangaroo Paws and Pink Heath. Walking along the bush track at the rear of the cemetery, Crested Shrike-tits, Varied Sittellas and Eastern Yellow Robins were among the many birds seen. There were leaves of hundreds of Nodding Greenhoods with a few still flowering as well as Tall Greenhoods and Common Bird Orchids. Walking back along the road, two raptor species were identified: Nankeen Kestrel and Brown Goshawk.



Eastern Spinebill (ED)



Dusky Woodswallow (ED)

Lunch was eaten overlooking Corinella Jetty from which a lot of fishing boats had evidently been launched. Australian Pelicans and Silver Gulls were seen, in an apparent frenzy, vying for fish scraps provided by the returning anglers.

The next venue was the Candowie Reservoir which was 100% full due to all the recent rain. There were not a lot of birds on the water (plenty of choice for them elsewhere) but there were still some interesting sightings such as a Royal Spoonbill, Musk Ducks, a nesting Black Swan and distant views of Cattle Egrets, a Swamp Harrier and a Wedge-tailed Eagle.



Royal Spoonbill (ED)



"... to further the study of Natural History in all its branches"

The final stop was at the top end of the Gurdies. There were some good bird sightings such as White-throated Treecreepers, Rufous Whistlers and lots of Superb Fairy-wrens. There were few orchids flowering, but plenty of leaves. Those in flower were Maroonhoods, Mosquito Orchids and Nodding and Tall greenhoods.



Mosquito Orchid (AV)



Golden Moths Orchid (AV)

Everyone seemed to enjoy the day, relishing in the lovely weather and the beautiful bush and scenery. From all the venues a magnificent total of 77 bird species was recorded.

The attached photos were taken by Eleanor Dilley and Alan Veevers.

By Hazel & Alan Veevers

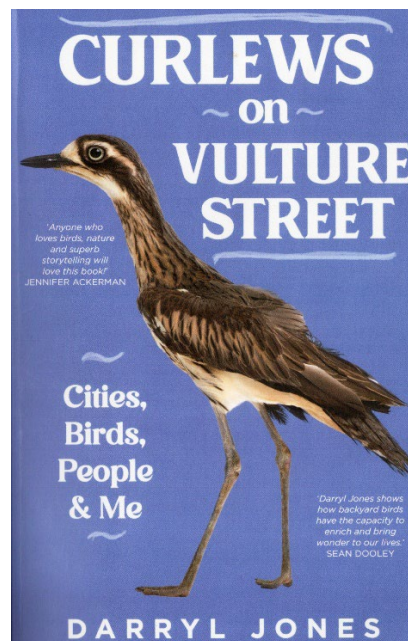
Book review – Curlews on Vulture Street (Darryl Jones)

A friend lent me this book recently and I found it most interesting. Darryl Jones is a Professor of Ecology at Griffith University in Brisbane, and he has been studying the way people and wildlife interact for over 30 years. He has been called upon by councils to try to help when there is conflict between birds and humans, e.g. when Magpies are attacking cyclists and when Brush Turkeys are reorganising peoples carefully manicured gardens.

The book begins with a brief account of his childhood, then continues with observations he made as a student and finally his work with his own honours graduates where different birds were closely studied. Some of their findings were most remarkable. I won't go into details as this might spoil your enjoyment of the book!

The good news is that a copy has been ordered for the library so you should be able to borrow it before too long!

By Hazel Veevers (RFNC Librarian)





Beechworth Weekend Away

Friday 7th to Sunday 9th October 2022

Leaders: Eeva & David Hewitt

Despite some very bad weather in the preceding days, Friday in Beechworth was mainly fine and we had only one brief shower during an early evening walk around Lake Sambell. In a bit less than one hour we managed to spot 36 different bird species before a barbecue dinner in the Caravan Park.

Saturday dawned bright and sunny and 20 of us headed off to Chiltern. We spent the morning at Dams no 1 & 2 before having lunch in Chiltern. Major highlights of the morning were excellent sightings of a pair of turquoise parrots, a dollarbird and a microbat which possibly had an injured wing. We also had brief glimpses of an antechinus.



Turquoise Parrot



Microbat

In the afternoon we visited Bartley's block, where we found the first orchids of the trip (nodding greenhoods and pink fingers) and a number of birds. We then drove slowly through the northern part of the Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park, stopping in a couple of spots to see good numbers of *Caladenia carnea* and *Pterostylis nana* orchids and the remains of one Tiger Orchid (*Diuris sulphurea*).



Caladenia carnea

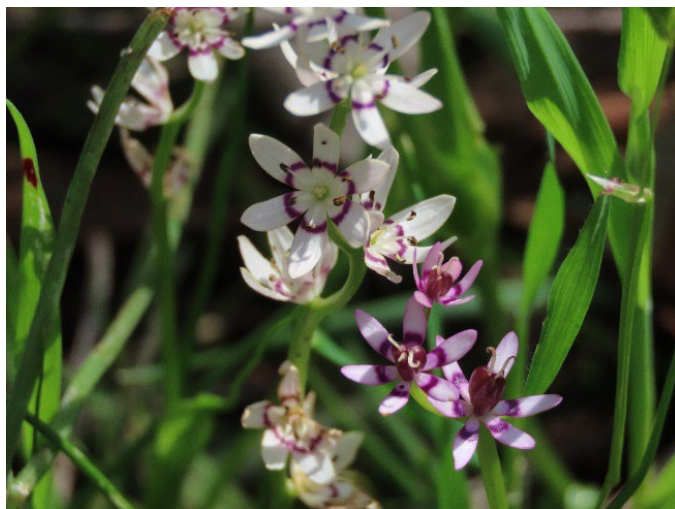


Diuris sulphurea

Our last stop was at the Magenta Mine site where there were a few more orchids and quite a few birds. We then drove back to Beechworth for another barbecue dinner with the full complement of 21 people.



Caladenia (Glossodia) major



Wurmbea diocia subsp. *diocia* (Early Nancy)

Sunday was again bright and sunny and we spent the day between Chiltern and Beechworth. First stop was the Honeyeater Picnic Ground where we spent more than three hours. There were many birds, possibly dominated by noisy friarbirds, but including fantail cuckoo, brown treecreeper, olive backed oriole and white-throated gerygone. A brief walk along the road led to the discovery of many pink fingers, a couple of different *Pterostylis* species, some tiger orchids, and, most impressively, large numbers of Purple Beard Orchids (*Calochilus robertsonii*) and one nearly open Sun Orchid.



Fan-tailed Cuckoo



Brown Treecreeper

After lunch we travelled south to the Mt Pilot summit road. About half the group climbed to the summit while others found a mass of Nodding Greenhoods (*Pterostylis nutans*), Blunt Greenhoods (*Pterostylis curta*) and Maroonhoods (*Pterostylis pedunculata*).



Pterostylis curta



Pterostylis pedunculata

A final stop on the way 'home' was at the Woolshed Falls which were flowing very strongly, although surprisingly less than we had seen on Friday. Here we saw the only butterfly of the weekend – an Australian Yellow Monarch.



Australian Yellow Monarch



Calochilus robertsonii

Over the weekend we found 90 different bird species and about 9 different orchids.



By Eeva & David Hewitt



Outdoor Meeting – Jells Park

Wednesday 11th January 2023

Leaders: Eleanor & Warwick Dilley

It is our normal practice to have an outdoor meeting in January, as our meeting room isn't available to us. In the past we have preceded the picnic tea and meeting with an afternoon walk, but in recent years we have had a series of hot afternoons with not much to see, as the birds take shelter from the heat.

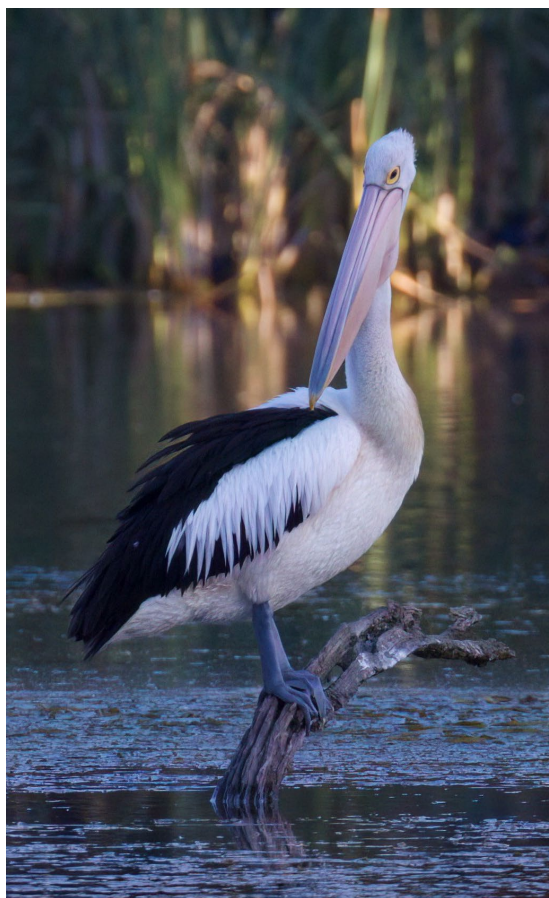
So the Committee decided to try the idea of a walk after our picnic and meeting, and this worked really well. The day had been quite hot, but the evening was beautiful, still warm, but with a gentle breeze.

We set off at about 7.00 pm and took about 1½ hours to stroll around the lake. We had the benefit of seeing both water birds and bush birds and finished up with the respectable total of 35.

Highlights included a pair of Tawny Frogmouths just waking up and getting ready to do the night shift, a solitary Australian Pelican, a pair of Royal Spoonbills, and a curious Yellow-faced Honeyeater.



Tawny Frogmouth



Australian Pelican



Australasian Darter

The dominant species is the Australian White Ibis and they have taken over the islands in the lake, mostly at ground level. Fortunately, there is still some room for other birds such as Australasian Darters, various Cormorants and the Royal Spoonbills to nest in the trees of the islands.



Rainbow Lorikeets



Dusky Moorhen with chick

Jells Park is a great place to visit at any time of the year and was the perfect venue for a warm summer evening.

By Eleanor & Warwick Dilley



Royal Spoonbills & Little Black Cormorants

Mount Baw Baw

Saturday 14th January 2023

Leaders: Alison & Peter Rogers

Members had an early start, meeting at Tanjil Bren for morning tea. There were many birds around this area, more than up on Mt Baw Baw, including Superb Fairy-wrens, Pied Currawongs, Brown Thornbills, King Parrots, Grey Fantails and Magpies.

Leaving Tanjil Bren, our first stop was car park number 5. Here some members chased Macleay's Swallowtails looking for a good photo. Cabbage White butterflies were more abundant and obliging, sitting longer on flowers enabling easier photographs. Senecios, buttercups and trigger plants were flowering profusely. Growing on the roadside embankment were a few colonies of *Pterostylis monticola* (Large Mountain Greenhood).



Macleay's Swallowtail



Pterostylis monticola (JA)

Moving to the end of the village, an early lunch was held in the picnic shelter.

Our plan was to walk the Summit Trail but being field naturalists, we ambled with frequent stops to look at and photograph our surrounds. We had only walked a matter of 30 metres from our lunch spot when we stopped to check the Milfoil speedwell or Snow speedwell (*Veronica nivea*) and Candle Heath (*Richea continentis*).

At the end of the bog area, we made a stop at a small alpine meadow. Here the ground was covered with Sky Lily (*Herpolirion novae-zelandiae*), Grass Trigger-plant (*Stylidium graminifolium*) and Creeping Fan-flower (*Scaevola hookeri*). We had to watch where we trod with the pretty herbage, many of which were being visited by butterflies.

Following the trail, we were again stopping constantly to photograph. One plant more often seen in berry but not in flower (as it was this year) was the Baw Baw Berry (*Wittsteinia vacciniacea*). Other plants along the trail included Mueller's bush-pea (*Pultenaea muelleri*), Snow Heath (*Epacris paludosa*), Alpine Mint Bush (*Prostanthera cuneata*), Alpine Orites (*Orites lancifolia*) and Snow Daisy (*Celmisia* sp.).



Mueller's bush-pea (*Pultenaea muelleri*)



Baw Baw Berry (*Wittsteinia vacciniacea*)

As a consequence, we only ambled as far as Downey's Picnic Area. Enjoying a rest, we were entertained by an adult and a juvenile Crescent Honeyeater that called and displayed in nearby trees.

Another slow meander found us back at the picnic shelter for our afternoon tea.

By Alison & Peter Rogers (additional photo by Jack Airey)



An alpine meadow



"... to further the study of Natural History in all its branches"

Point Cook

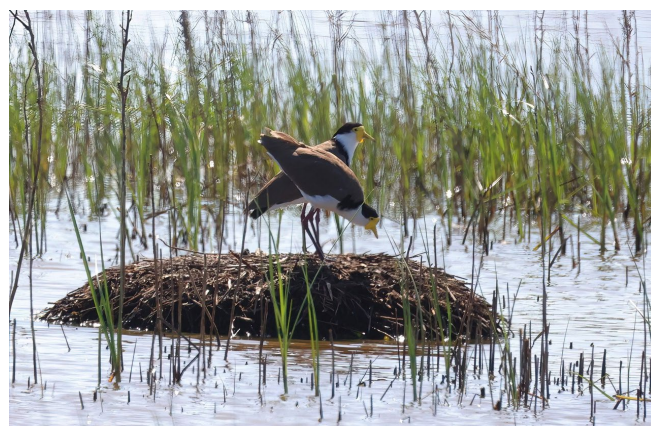
Saturday 11th February 2023

Leaders: Inta & Roger Needham

Eighteen members arrived at Point Cook Coastal Park on a bright sunny morning with a gentle cooling breeze.

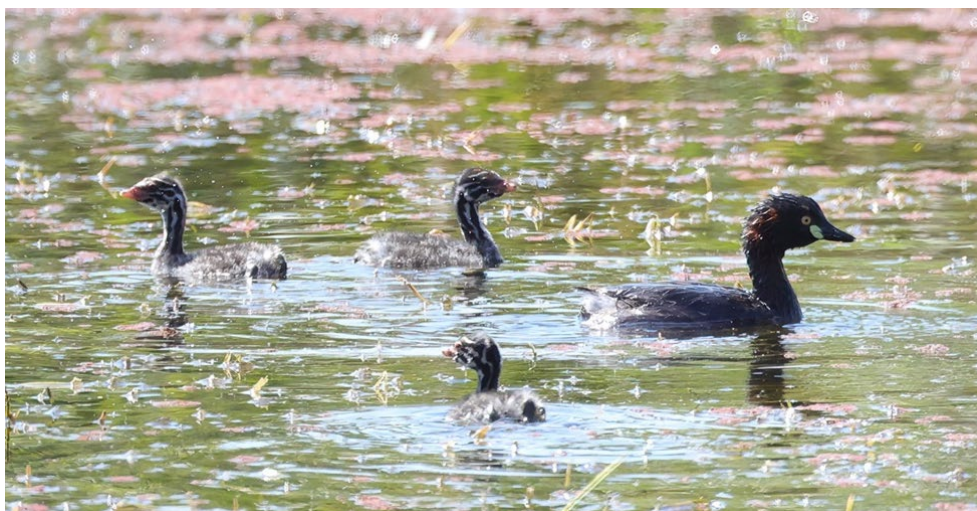
Our first walk was around the Beach Picnic Area where small bush birds such as Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Superb Fairywren and Yellow-rumped Thornbills were seen. We diverted down to the beach where we saw rafts of hundreds of Silver Gulls floating off shore along with one lonely Little Black Cormorant. Discussions were had regarding the name of the grass covering the dunes near the beach. Later, viewing Graham Patterson's book on the coast of Western Victoria, it was found to be Hares-tail grass (*Lagurus ovatus*), an overseas import. Back nearer to the carpark people were entertained by Red-browed Finches and European Goldfinch.

As we left the carpark, Lynn and Neil spotted a Swamp Harrier flying off. At the first lagoon on the right after exiting the carpark we saw Black Ducks, Magpie-larks and Masked Lapwing. The Lapwings were on a mound in the lagoon which looked like a nesting site. A small sapling was closely examined but the bird we were searching for turned out to be a leaf.



Masked Lapwings

Next destination was the RAAF Lake carpark. Golden-headed Cisticolas were seen in the grassland beside the lake. A walk across the road to a small wetland produced Australasian Swamphens, Dusky Moorhen, Chestnut Teal and a pair of adult Australasian Grebe and their 5 offspring. The offspring were still in their stripey plumage.



Australasian Grebe family

At Saltwater Coast wetland, which is associated with a housing development, we saw Eurasian Coot, more Dusky Moorhen and a Little Pied Cormorant which flew in and landed on a structure. Don alerted us to a raptor flying in the west and a White-faced Heron was spotted flying to our east. The gentle breeze had now become a very strong breeze so apart from a Crested Pigeon, an accommodating Yellow-rumped Thornbill and hyperactive European Goldfinch, few other birds were seen.

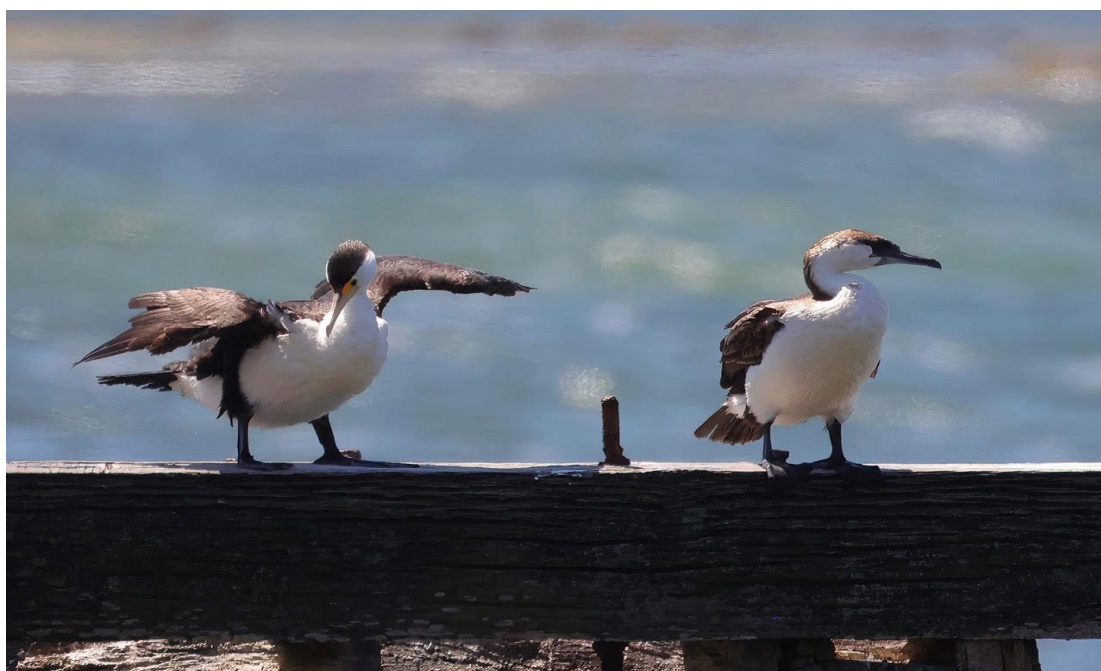
Lunch was eaten at the traditional spot under the conifers in the Point Cook Homestead carpark. The wind was now quite strong - hats needed to be held down tightly and some members now found it too cold in the shade, even though the temperature was about 30 degrees celsius.

After lunch we walked toward the Homestead, the adjacent beach and Point Cook itself. Just as we were leaving the carpark Eleanor spotted a light coloured, fast moving Brown Falcon. Then before we had gone too far a Black-shouldered Kite gave us good views as it circled above. Near the Homestead a Nankeen Kestrel circled us before settling in the top of a dead tree.



Black-shouldered Kite

Near the Homestead Beach we met divers who told us of the sightings they had made that morning in the Marine Sanctuary nearby. Plenty of rays as well as other fish and sea creatures. Near the shore we spied huge jelly fish which had been washed up. On the remains of an old jetty were three Pied Cormorants accompanied by a lone Black-faced Cormorant.



Pied Cormorant & Black-faced Cormorant

At the Point were a flock of Pied Cormorants, a large number of Silver Gulls, 20-30 Crested Terns and 2 or 3 Common Terns. People were glad to round the Point to avoid the wind from the southwest which was now quite strong. We walked back to our lunch spot where the outing came to an end.

A total of 42 birds were seen for the day. For many members present, it was the first time they had been to Point Cook and they commented on it being a very pleasant outing to a very interesting site.

Many thanks to Eleanor Dille for providing the excellent photos which accompany this report.

By Inta & Roger Needham



Weekend away to Marysville

Friday 17th to Sunday 19th of March 2023

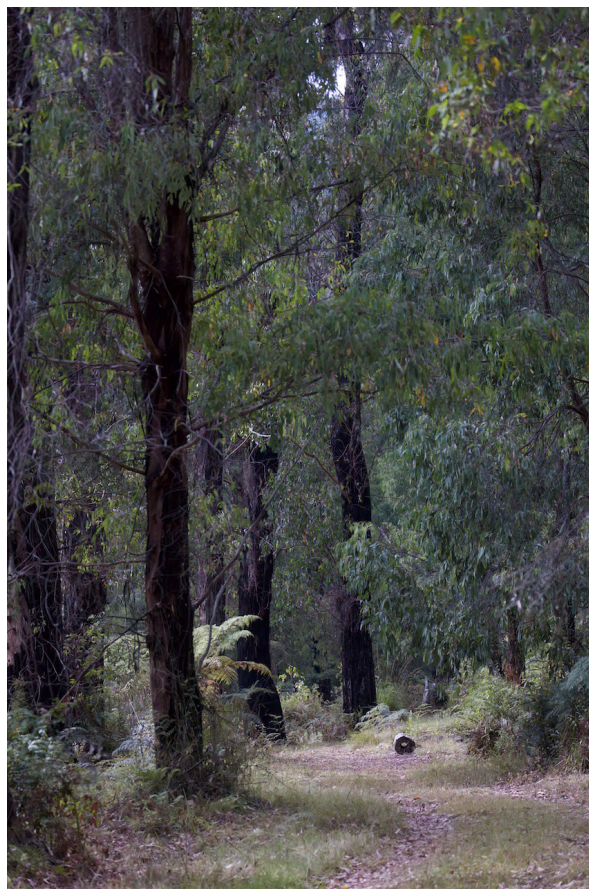
Leaders: Shirley Smith & Barbara Lloyd

There were 27 members of the Club who attended for the whole weekend and 2 who came for Sunday only. This was the first Camp for several of our new members. Participants were all provided with maps of the various intended walks and a copy of the suggested program.

On Friday afternoon we did a short walk along the Gilbert Gully Track. Following this we had a communal BBQ back at the Caravan Park. There were lots of delicious salads and desserts to enjoy with the meat we each supplied for ourselves.

The advertised program for Saturday had to be cancelled because of the declaration of a Total Fire Ban. It is a club rule not to run activities and excursions on days of Total Fire Ban, so rather than organised walks, people arranged their own program for the day choosing some of the suggested walks and drives around Marysville. All the participants attended the Duck Inn on Saturday night and enjoyed a very extensive menu with 25 main courses from which to choose. The Duck Inn was conveniently located just a short walk from the caravan park.

Marysville didn't get nearly as hot and windy as Melbourne on the Saturday and we woke on Sunday to a cooler, calm day. Sunday's program was rearranged to allow one of Saturday's activities to go ahead. In the morning we walked most of the Tree Fern Gully walk. After lunch in Gallipoli Park, we headed for Buxton and walked from the Buxton Mountain Bike Park to the Meeting of the Rivers (the Acheron, Steavenson and Little Steavenson Rivers). After afternoon tea and goodbyes most people headed home.



Swamp Wallaby (ED)



Eastern Yellow Robin (ED)

Eucalyptus regans (Mountain Ash) must be the plant of the weekend. It is Mountain Ash that makes the drive through the Black Spur so amazing, and we saw them on all the walks for the weekend. Other interesting plants include *Correa lawrenciana* (Mountain Correa), *Ozothamnus ferrugineus* (Tree Everlasting), *Pomaderris aspera* (Hazel Pomaderris), *Prostanthera lasiantha* (Victorian Christmas Bush), *Goodenia ovata* (Hop Goodenia), *Goodia lotifolia* (Golden Tips), *Lomatia ilicifolia* (Holly Lomatia) and *Platylobium formosum* (Handsome Flat-pea).

Altogether about 50 birds were sighted for the bird list. Thanks, Hazel, for doing the bird list for the weekend.

Thanks to all participants for being such a lovely group who cooperated extremely well with no complaints when our plans had to be altered because of the declaration of the total fire ban. Thanks to Eleanor for the photos with the report. Thanks to David for taking the group photo. We offered to take over the organisation of the camp from Hazel and Alan as Hazel had mobility issues which meant that she could not do the advanced planning necessary for the Camp. However, we did both enjoy the experience.



By Shirley Smith and Barbara Lloyd

Member's Articles

Trust for Nature – Preserving the bush

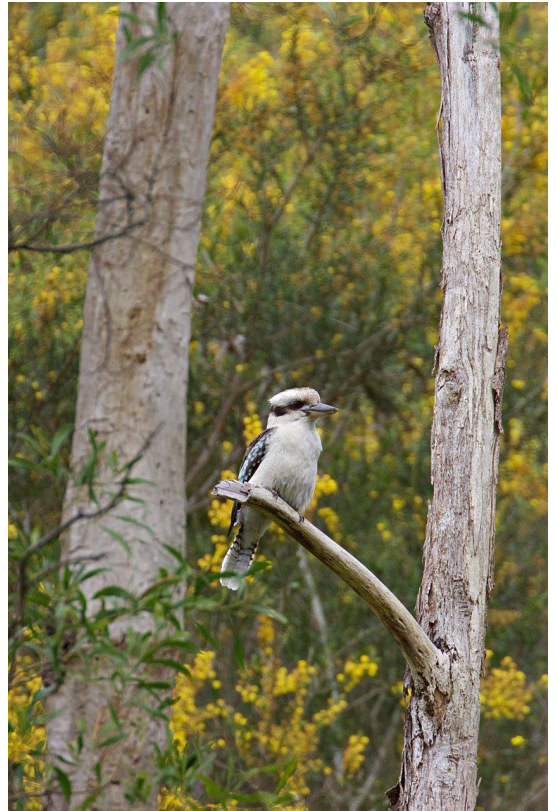
An article from a recent Trust for Nature magazine, provided by Nicki Zanen.

Eleanor Dilley was looking for a patch of land to protect when she found a 20 ha bush block on Taungurung Country near Yea.

"I'd read about Trust for Nature and the idea of having a covenant and it just struck me as a good sort of thing to do," Eleanor said. "I told the real estate agent that I was looking for a block to covenant. He said, 'They're hard to break' and I said, 'That's the idea'. I wanted to preserve that bit of bush."

Recently Eleanor generously decided to donate the property to Trust for Nature, where it will be sold through the Trust's Revolving Fund program. Proceeds from the fund are used to further conservation work. "We were trying to think what the best thing to do with it was. We never bought it to sell and make a profit and I had a very high opinion of Trust for Nature. I think it's a great organisation."

The bush block protects Dry Sclerophyll Forest, including some large Messmates growing beside the creek, with plenty of birds and butterflies in the right season. Eleanor has looked after the property by controlling weeds such as Holly. After growing up in Sydney, Eleanor has lived in Victoria since the 1970s. When she retired in the early 2000s, she began to get involved with field naturalists and discovered a passion for bird photography and conservation.



St Andrews Cross spiders

I wonder if like us, you have been inundated with the very pretty St Andrews Cross Spider. During January and February we have had over a dozen of these spiders in our native garden with as many as 7 in the one bush at one time. I hear from others that they have been seen in their exotic plant gardens as well.

We have watched with interest these creatures as they go about their daily business. Luckily, they tend to build their web in bushes and not over pathways like some of the other varieties.

These spiders get their name from the shape of their web decorations, the white silk that they spin through the centre of the orb web in the shape of a cross. The spider also sits in the web with its legs in pairs forming the shape of a cross. Usually flying prey is caught in the web. Before biting their prey, all except the smallest prey is first wrapped up and secured in silk.

Prey of the St Andrew's Cross Spider includes flies, moths, butterflies, bugs and bees.

There is little risk of humans being bitten by these spiders although they might bite if handled. Their venom is not regarded as a serious medical problem.



Females can be quite silvery and have a silver, yellow, red and black banded upper abdomen with two longitudinal yellow stripes below. The brown and cream-coloured males are smaller than females.

The cream-coloured young spiders make a circular web decoration (like a white silk doily) that disguises them well and may also act as a sunshade. As the spider grows the 'doily' is gradually transformed into a 'cross'.

Mating occurs from summer to autumn and can be hazardous for the small male St Andrew's Cross Spiders. One or more males sit in the upper parts of the web - some may be missing legs, survivors of encounters with unreceptive females. The male constructs a mating thread within the web, onto which it attracts a receptive female by vibrating the thread. The female suspends its pear-shaped egg sac in a network of threads, often among leaves where the sac's greenish silk disguises it. Despite this, the egg sacs are often the target of parasitic wasps and flies.

These spiders only have a one-year life span.

The St Andrew's Cross Spider is found in eastern Australia in habitats ranging from rainforest margins to open forest and heath land in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.

We have enjoyed our little visitors for the time they were with us, but the St Andrew Cross spiders in our garden are now moving on.

By Alison Rogers



". . . to further the study of Natural History in all its branches"

Appendix

Brisbane Ranges bird list – 25 species

Compiled by Alison & Peter Rogers

Red Wattlebird	Galah	Crimson Rosella
Rainbow Lorikeet	Australian Magpie	Welcome Swallow
Grey Shrike-thrush	Grey Currawong	White-eared Honeyeater
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Brown Thornbill	New Holland Honeyeater
Sulphur Crested Cockatoo	Grey Fantail	Spotted Quail-thrush
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	Eastern Spinebill	White-naped Honeyeater
Striated Pardalote	Wedge-tailed Eagle	Superb Fairy-wren
Fantail Cuckoo	Laughing Kookaburra	White-faced Heron
White-throated Treecreeper		

Brisbane Ranges orchid list – 16 species

Compiled by Alison & Peter Rogers

<i>Acianthus caudatus</i>	Mayfly Orchid
<i>Acianthus pusillus</i>	Mosquito Orchid (old leaves)
<i>Caladenia caerulea</i>	Blue Fingers
<i>Caladenia carnea</i>	Pink Fingers
<i>Caladenia concolor</i>	BR Spider Orchid
<i>Caladenia fuscata</i>	Dusky Fingers
<i>Caladenia major</i>	Waxlip Orchid (buds)
<i>Caladenia parva</i>	Small Spider Orchid
<i>Corybas incurvus</i>	Slaty Helmet Orchid
<i>Cyrtostylis reniformis</i>	Small Gnat Orchid
<i>Diuris pardina</i>	Leopard Orchid
<i>Pterostylis melagramma</i>	Tall Greenhood
<i>Pterostylis nana</i>	Dwarf Greenhood
<i>Pterostylis nutans</i>	Nodding Greenhood
<i>Pterostylis parviflora</i>	Tiny Greenhood (old leaves)
<i>Pyrorchis nigricans</i>	Red Beaks (leaves)



"... to further the study of Natural History in all its branches"

Corinella & Grantville bird list – 77 species

Compiled by Hazel & Alan Veevers

Black Swan	Royal Spoonbill	Spotted Pardalote
Australian Shelduck	Little Pied Cormorant	Striated Pardalote
Australian Shoveler	Great Cormorant	White-browed Scrubwren
Pacific Black Duck	Little Black Cormorant	Striated Thornbill
Grey Teal	Pied Cormorant	Brown Thornbill
Chestnut Teal	Wedge-tailed Eagle	Varied Sittella
Musk Duck	Swamp Harrier	Rufous Whistler
Australian Wood Duck	Brown Goshawk	Golden Whistler
Australasian Grebe	Laughing Kookaburra	Grey Shrike-thrush
Spotted Dove	Nankeen Kestrel	Crested Shrike-tit
Crested Pigeon	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Grey Currawong
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	Galah	Australian Magpie
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Grey Butcherbird
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Crimson Rosella	Dusky Woodswallow
Purple Swamphen	Eastern Rosella	Willie Wagtail
Dusky Moorhen	Rainbow Lorikeet	Grey Fantail
Eurasian Coot	White-throated Treecreeper	Little Raven
Australian Pied Oystercatcher	Superb Fairy-wren	Australian Raven
Masked Lapwing	New Holland Honeyeater	Eastern Yellow Robin
Silver Gull	White-eared Honeyeater	Red-browed Finch
Pacific Gull	Easter Spinebill	European Goldfinch
Australian Pelican	Little Wattlebird	Welcome Swallow
Cattle Egret	Red Wattlebird	Common Starling
White-faced Heron	White-plumed Honeyeater	Common Myna
Australian White Ibis	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Common Blackbird
Straw-necked Ibis	Noisy Miner	

Jells Park bird list – 35 species

Compiled by Eleanor & Warwick Dilley

Black Swan	Australian White Ibis	Superb Fairy-wren
Australian Wood Duck	Dusky Moorhen	Brown Thornbill
Chestnut Teal	Purple Swamphen	Red Wattlebird
Hardhead	Eurasian Coot	Noisy Miner
Pacific Black Duck	Common Bronzewing	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Australasian Grebe	Spotted Turtledove	Grey Fantail
Australasian Darter	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Magpie Lark
Great Cormorant	Rainbow Lorikeet	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Little Black Cormorant	Crimson Rosella	Australian Magpie
Little Pied Cormorant	Eastern Rosella	Little Raven
Australian Pelican	Tawny Frogmouth	Australian Reed-warbler (heard)
Royal Spoonbill	Laughing Kookaburra	



"... to further the study of Natural History in all its branches"

Chiltern-Beechworth bird list – 90 species

Compiled by Eeva & David Hewitt

	Fri	Sat	Sun
Australian Pelican		✓	
Darter		✓	
Little Pied Cormorant	✓	✓	
Great Cormorant	✓		
Little Back Cormorant		✓	✓
Australasian Grebe	✓		✓
Pacific Black Duck	✓	✓	✓
Muscovy Duck	✓		
Pink-eared Duck		✓	
Australian Wood Duck	✓	✓	✓
Dusky Moorhen	✓	✓	✓
Purple Swamphen	✓		✓
Eurasian Coot			✓
White-faced Heron		✓	
Great Egret		✓	
Australian White Ibis	✓	✓	✓
Royal Spoonbill		✓	
Yellow-billed Spoonbill		✓	
Masked Lapwing			✓
Whistling Kite		✓	
Brown Falcon		✓	
Peaceful Dove	✓	✓	
Common Bronzewing		✓	✓
Crested Pigeon		✓	
Gang-gang Cockatoo	✓		
Galah	✓	✓	✓
Little Corella		✓	
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	✓	✓	✓
Australian King Parrot	✓		
Crimson Rosella	✓		✓
Yellow Rosella		✓	
Eastern Rosella			✓
Red-rumped Parrot		✓	
Turquoise Parrot		✓	
Fan-tailed Cuckoo			✓
Horsefield's Bronze Cuckoo		✓	
Shining Bronze Cuckoo	✓		✓
Laughing Kookaburra	✓	✓	✓
Sacred Kingfisher		✓	✓
Dollarbird		✓	
White-throated Treecreeper			✓
Brown Treecreeper		✓	✓
Superb Fairywren	✓	✓	✓
Spotted Pardalote			✓
Striated Pardalote			✓



"... to further the study of Natural History in all its branches"

White-browed Scrubwren			✓
White-throated Gerygone			✓
Western Gerygone		✓	
Brown Thornbill			✓
Yellow Thornbill	✓		
Buff-rumped Thornbill		✓	
Yellow-rumped Thornbill	✓		✓
Red Wattlebird	✓	✓	✓
Noisy Friarbird		✓	✓
Blue-faced Honeyeater		✓	
Noisy Miner		✓	
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	✓		
White-eared Honeyeater		✓	
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater		✓	✓
Fuscous Honeyeater		✓	✓
White-plumed Honeyeater		✓	✓
New Holland Honeyeater	✓		
Eastern Spinebill	✓		
Eastern Yellow Robin			✓
Jacky Winter		✓	
Crested Shrike-tit		✓	
Grey Shrike-thrush			✓
Rufous Whistler		✓	✓
Grey Fantail	✓	✓	✓
Willy Wagtail		✓	✓
Restless Flycatcher		✓	
Magpie Lark	✓	✓	
Olive-backed Oriole			✓
Satin Bowerbird	✓		✓
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike		✓	✓
White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike			✓
Dusky Woodswallow		✓	
Australian Magpie	✓	✓	✓
Pied Currawong	✓	✓	✓
Australian Raven		✓	✓
Little Raven		✓	✓
White-winged Chough		✓	
Welcome Swallow	✓	✓	
Tree Martin		✓	
Fairy Martin		✓	
Clamorous reed-warbler	✓	✓	✓
European Goldfinch	✓	✓	
Silvereye	✓	✓	
Common Blackbird	✓		✓
Common Starling	✓		

Fri – Lake Sambell Circuit, Sat – Nos 1 & 2 Dams, Bartley's Block, Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park, Sun – Honeyeater Picnic Ground, Mt Pilot Summit, Woolshed Falls. Also saw antechinus, microbat, wallabies, some moths and a butterfly.



"... to further the study of Natural History in all its branches"

Point Cook bird list – 42 species

Compiled by Inta & Roger Needham

Australian Shelduck	Crested Tern	Singing Honeyeater
Pacific Black Duck	Common Tern	Yellow-rumped Thornbill
Grey Teal	White-faced Heron	Australian Magpie
Chestnut Teal	Little Pied Cormorant	Willie Wagtail
Australian Wood Duck	Little Black Cormorant	Grey Fantail
Australasian Grebe	Pied Cormorant	Little Raven
Rock Dove	Black-faced Cormorant	Magpie-lark
Crested Pigeon	Black-shouldered Kite	Red-browed Finch
Australasian Swamphen	Swamp Harrier	European Goldfinch
Dusky Moorhen	Nankeen Kestrel	Golden-headed Cisticola
Eurasian Coot	Brown Falcon	Welcome Swallow
Masked Lapwing	Superb Fairy-wren	Silvereye
Silver Gull	Little Wattlebird	Common Starling
Pacific Gull	Red Wattlebird	Common Myna

Marysville bird list – 49 species

Compiled by Hazel Veevers

Pacific Black Duck	Eastern Rosella	Satin Bowerbird
Australian Wood Duck	Superb Lyrebird	Golden Whistler
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	White-throated Treecreeper	Grey Shrike-thrush
Pallid Cuckoo	Superb Fairy-wren	Eastern Whipbird
Masked Lapwing	Crescent Honeyeater	Olive-backed Oriole
White-necked Heron	New Holland Honeyeater	Pied Currawong
White-faced Heron	White-eared Honeyeater	Australian Magpie
Wedge-tailed Eagle	White-naped Honeyeater	Dusky Woodswallow
Sacred Kingfisher	Eastern Spinebill	Grey Fantail
Laughing Kookaburra	Lewins Honeyeater	Little Raven
Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Red Wattlebird	Australian Raven
Gang-gang Cockatoo	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Magpie-lark
Galah	Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Yellow Robin
Long-billed Corella	White-browed Scrubwren	Welcome Swallow
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Large-billed Scrubwren	Silvereye
Australian King-Parrot	Brown Thornbill	
Crimson Rosella	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	