

# THE LAUNCESTON NATURALIST

Issued to members of the Launceston Field Naturalists Club as a contribution to club activities.



The aim of the Launceston Field Naturalists Club is to encourage the study of all aspects of natural history and to support the conservation of our natural heritage

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**August/September 2014**

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<b>Committee</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>Ms Campbell, Ms McGlynn, Ms Wright, Mr Warren</b>

**Meetings 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of month, Feb-Dec at Scotch-Oakburn College, Penquite Rd Newstead**

## PROGRAM

### OCTOBER

- Tuesday 7**                    **AGM Dinner Meeting ~ Kain's Restaurant, Launceston**
- Sunday 12**                    **Field Trip: Badger Head**
- Saturday 18 ~  
Monday 27**                    **Australian Naturalists Network get-together hosted by Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club based in Hobart**
- Saturday 25 or  
Sunday 26 (are  
proposed)**                    **Field Trip with Australian Plant Society (APS) members to a private bush block between Conara and Avoca for wildflowers and orchids (more details this newsletter)**

### NOVEMBER

- Tuesday 4**                    **Speaker: Jane Elek ~ *Rockpools; windows to the animal kingdom***
- Friday 7 ~  
Sunday 9**                    **Federation of Field Naturalists get-together hosted by Burnie Field Naturalists Club based in Somerset**
- Sunday 9**                    **Landcare field day @ Skemps**
- Saturday 15**                    **Field Trip with APS and Threatened Species Tasmania & Dr Richard Schahinger ~ Breadalbane (more details this newsletter)**
- TBA**                            **Field Trip: Henry Somerset Reserve, native orchids**
- Sunday 30**                    **Skemp Day: QVMAG Bug Day Out**

### DECEMBER

- Tuesday 2**                    **Members Night~Photographic Competition and *The Year That Was* (more details this newsletter)**
- Sunday 7**                    **Christmas @ Skemps (more details this newsletter)**

**For last minute changes to program visit**

**<http://www.lfnc.org.au/meetings.htm>**

## Skemp Report

We have had a strange season over the past 12 months with little growth in the grass at Skemps. This means that the new ride on mower has not had a proper workout. The new chainsaw has been put to work first though adding to our fire wood stocks and lately clearing tracks. The Tuesday crew found it difficult to start the new chainsaw although neighbour Murray could get it going in two or three pulls. After my chain saw course I found it much easier to start and learnt how to properly sharpen it as well and with help from Grant I am learning how to properly clean it.

Using John Elliott's excellent plan, and mostly donated materials, we built an extension to the barn as a second fire wood storage area. The idea is to fill them one at a time with green wood which will dry out and be available for the big fire place in the field centre in 1 to 2 years time. When fully utilised there should be three or more years stored in these two areas.

In late July we had some of the worst storms experienced in Tasmania and we lost power at our home for 38 hours. Expecting the worst, Karen and I visited Skemps the following Sunday finding that the buildings had survived unscathed so we decided to check some of the tracks. While Karen walked the Water Gate and North Tracks, I walked the Zigzag track meeting near the top water feature. These tracks had some damage but were passable and we decided that I would walk the Tyre/Fern Gully track and Karen would clean up and lock the centre. Leaving about 30 minutes after me she would meet me on Targa Hill Road at the bottom of the property. Just before the tyre I found 12 fallen spars which made continuing the walk rather difficult and noted around 20 blockages across these tracks in total. As you would expect I was late to meet up with Karen.

On Tuesday 12 August members Ann, Grant, John, Rob, Roy and Peter (Warren) and myself went to Skemps to repair the damage. While Peter worked on the eight ball table the rest of us went to clear the tracks and Skemps Road. I worked with Roy on the Tyre Track clearing spars that I would not have tackled and I was impressed with his chainsaw skills. After that we went to the old entrance track to the Fern Gully from the Forest Track and, with help from Ann, cleared that of some rather large logs. There is still work to do especially if you are able to handle a chainsaw.

Near the end of the day a strange mechanical rumble greeted those milling about near the barbecue. It proved to be neighbour Murray on his tractor with a picnic table on the fork lift attachment.

The table was the first produced by Murray from the old pines at Skemps and it is very sturdy. Thanks to him we have a great contribution to the outdoor eating area. Thanks also to Peter Warren who sanded the table top and seats.

With the death of John Simmons there is little construction at Skemps, other than the new wood shed, just maintenance of existing infrastructure. As well as storm damage there have been three failures of the water pipes requiring work and we wonder if we really know how this system works.

The property is in great shape although help is needed with track maintenance and if you have volunteered to maintain a track please do so. Noel Manning

## COMMITTEE/GENERAL MEETING

### **Puggle**

**August** ~ Tom McGlynn told members that the echidna, platypus and lyrebird appeared on Australian coins and asked what else they had in common. John Elliott and Peter Ralph both correctly answered that they laid eggs.

**September** ~ John Elliott asked members the age of the rocks/fossils found during the field trip to Poatina. Tina stated that these were Permian rocks and around 200 million years old.

### **Sightings**

**August** ~ Eastern spinebills were seen in Norwood Avenue, green rosella in Herring Street and a rainbow/musk lorikeet hybrid in Talbot Road by John Elliott. Peter Ralph had seen grey currawongs nesting in Legana. Tina McGlynn had seen a white/grey goshawk feeding on carrion on Nunamara Road and heard her first fan-tailed cuckoo this season at Westwood. Tom Treloggen brought in a large stick insect for members to look at and a sample of fungi.

**September** ~ Noel Manning described seeing a raptor brought down by two forest ravens on the way to the Maria Island field trip. Alison Green had seen a male blue wren and noted that it was without a partner which she considered to be unusual. John Elliott had seen a blue wren at Skemps on 2 September, a brown goshawk in City Park and a boobook owl calling at Punchbowl. Marion Simmons had seen magpies attacking a kookaburra.

**Library Report** ~ Tina McGlynn reported that the Club had received the usual newsletters and that member Paul Edwards had an article in the Natural News about the *Nothofagus gunnii*.

**General** ~ Research is being undertaken on sparrows in Tasmania and help is being sought from field naturalists in finding areas when the birds are located. Members were asked to contact the Club's Secretary if they can help.

**New Members** ~ Robert Joy and Toby Lockhart (junior member) were welcomed to the Club in September. We look forward to them joining us at Club activities.

**Club Calendar 2015** ~ Calendars are available for purchase at \$12.00 each. The 2015 calendar is different from those of previous years. It is A4 sized, professionally printed on quality paper, has a laminated front cover and is spiral bound.

The calendar would make a great Christmas gift and showcases some of Tasmania's wonderful natural history, all images are by Club members. They will be sold at meetings, field trips and Skemp Day; see Karen Manning to make a purchase. If you would like to purchase at a time other than above, please contact Karen on 6344 2277 to make other arrangements.

***A Guide to Flowers and Plants of Tasmania*** ~ Karen will also have copies of the Club's field guide available for sale at \$22 at all Club activities. The guide would also

make a great Christmas gift.

**Photographic Competition** ~The competition will be held after the general meeting in December. Due to time limitations to erect the display of entries and judge them, there will be a limit of three entries per member. Members at the meeting will judge and vote on the entries; prizes will be awarded for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places.

**Conditions of entry**

- **Print topics:** subjects are to be related to Tasmanian flora, fauna, minerals, Tasmanian landscapes and astronomical events observed in Tasmania. Animals and plants must occur naturally in Tasmania. Introduced species or garden varieties of Tasmania are not acceptable.
- The subject of each print must be identified. For landscapes, the identification must include the aspect of nature study that it illustrates.
- **Print size:** up to A4 (30cm x 21cm)
- **Print medium:** colour or monochrome (black and white)
- Must be simply mounted on cardboard at least.
- Entries to have been taken since January 2013
- The competition is open to members only and prints should be brought in on the night.

**Christmas at Skemps** ~ Members were reminded that they are welcome to invite their family and friends to join them at the end of year function at Skemps, which will be held on Sunday 7 December.

If you and your guests would like to participate in the Secret Santa (optional), please provide an appropriate wrapped gift up to \$10 to put under the tree and ensure your name is placed on Santa's list when you arrive at the Centre. Please label your gift 'male' or 'female' if the gift is gender specific. Everyone attending will go in the draw for the lucky door prize so get your ticket on arrival. If you bring a child you can bring a gift for them, well labeled with their name, which will be given out separately. Santa will make an appearance prior to afternoon tea.

Please bring your own lunch, the BBQ will be lit if you would like to bring something to cook, and a plate of food to share for afternoon tea would be appreciated.

**AUGUST GENERAL MEETING ~ GUEST SPEAKER ~ Leigh Walters**  
*Tasmanian Land Conservancy*

Leigh started by reminding us that he was involved in the covenant placed on Skemps in around 2000 before telling us of the work and aims of the Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC) and of his involvement with the maintenance side of the group.

He stated that the TLC is an environmental organisation which raises money from the public to protect irreplaceable sites, endangered species habitats' and rare eco-systems by buying and managing that land.

The TLC is a private company started by 50 people putting up \$50 each and an initial donation from David Walsh allowed the TLC to purchase Long Point Reserve on Moulting Lagoon and now has a total of 13 reserves and the next slide showed the

location and names of these reserves.

In 2010 the TLC embarked on its biggest project called New Leaf with the aim to secure around 28,000 Ha of land previously subject to significant timber harvesting with 13,000 Ha added in June 2014. A slide showed five areas where the New Leaf land is with the final tally being 34 properties covering 25,670 Ha. The bulk of this land was in the Bronte Region (11,700 Ha), Lakes District (9,600 Ha) and Launceston area (3,900 Ha).

Leigh told us of the areas of operation of the TLC starting with the purchase and reservation of properties as permanent reserves. The TLC also operates a Revolving Fund where land is purchased, a conservation covenant is placed on the land title to protect the natural values and the property is on sold and that in general there is an exclusion zone on the property that allows for a house and associated infrastructure.

We learnt of the Midlands Conservation Fund, a joint partnership between TLC and Bush Heritage Australia, a project working with landowners in the Midlands region to protect high priority vegetation communities and fauna habitat. The focus is on providing Stewardship funds on an annual basis for the protection of important natural values.

The Protected Areas on Private Land Program is a joint partnership with DPIPW and funded by the Federal Government working with landowners who wish to voluntarily covenant land in perpetuity. 5,000 Ha of private land is under this scheme for the protection of natural values.

In partnership with Birds Australia, TLC is protecting the vital breeding areas of the Swift Parrots on private land and has created six new protected areas of mostly high value *Eucalyptus globulus* coastal forest.

We learnt about Biodiversity Offsets as a mitigation measure for impacts associated with development. Leigh has been working on a project which has secured 500 Ha of land on 19 private properties to protect nests and nesting habitat for the Wedge tailed eagle and White bellied sea eagle.

A slide showed the Focal Landscape, the areas where the TLC considers there are natural values worth saving through intervention in the future . The areas listed were the far north west, Darling Range, Blue Tier, Ross/Campbell Town (The Peppermints, Wolfs Craig & Macquarie Tier), Epping Forest (& Ben Lomond Foothills), Lake River, Skullbone Plains, Meehan Range, Middlesex Plains, Swan Apsley and the use River.

Leigh asked what we can do to help the TLC and stated that the TLC receives no ongoing funding for land management and requires the continued support from the community with donations and volunteering. An example of this is the Long Point Reserve where over 10 years hundreds of volunteers have contributed to the removal of over 25 Ha of gorse. He then spoke of the Vale of Belvoir property near Cradle Mountain. Cattle are still grazed on the property with TLC staff monitoring and researching the effects of the grazing. Donations to the Reserves Management Fund are quarantined to ensure long term management can occur and Leigh told us that he was part of the team looking after the permanent properties of the TLC.

During question time we were treated to a slide show mainly of eagle nests on the properties where Leigh had visited. Tom Trelloggen thanked him and asked members to show their appreciation.

Noel Manning

## **FIELD TRIP ~ Friday 8 to Sunday 10 August : Maria Island**

Six members and two visitors met at Triabunna to travel by the afternoon ferry service for a weekend on Maria Island. The trip was rough and cold in the blustery conditions and landing at Darlington was a challenge for the captain of our boat.

On the island we stashed our gear in a trolley and with Prue steering we pushed it up to the Penitentiary rooms, our home for the next two days. Unpacked we returned the trolley to the wharf and chopped enough wood for the fireplace for the next two days. We would rely on this heater for warmth, some cooking and boiling water for tea and coffee. Although the mess hall has gas cookers we used camp stoves in the rooms for most cooking, and candles and lanterns for light.

With the sun low in the sky the photographers set off to catch the sunset, while others took short walks to explore the ruins of the cement works, the cemetery and surrounding buildings. Karl and I walked to the Fossil Cliffs, seeing large groups of kangaroo in the distance, and many pairs of Cape Barron Geese and large wombats closer by. We were too late to have a good look around at the cliffs, but read the information board and looked through the collection of fossilised rocks left nearby. It was dark by the time we had returned and meals were being prepared, which was followed by learning a few new card games and discussing tomorrow's exploring and proposed walks, before heading to bed.

John, Ann, George and Jan were up extremely early to photograph the dawn vistas, arriving back as others were breakfasting.

Noel, Karl and I planned to climb Bishop and Clerk, so headed off early with Prue and Ann. Our walk to the rocky pinnacle was firstly via open paddocks. On Skipping Ridge we walked through a stand of sheoaks and as we moved further up and inland from the coast, eucalypts dominated. It was here Prue and Ann left us, they were returning to explore the Reservoir Circuit and quarry further back. Higher up the bush track was surrounded by blackwood, mountain peppers, native currant, banksia, needlebush and cheeseberry, we could hear birds calling above us in the trees, but we could not see them as the canopy was quite dense. The temperature became cooler as we exited the forest onto an exposed scree slope. The final ascent took half an hour, by which time the temperature had dropped quite a bit and the wind had increased.

Karl managed to climb up on the very top of rocks, but Noel and I couldn't manage it. We had lunch in a sheltered spot in the rocks just under the summit and then returned for another try, but once again failed. With this Karl decided there had to be another way to get up there and did find a spot further around the rocks where I was able to shimmy up in between two larger rocks. We stayed on top only long enough to take photos of ourselves and the great view to prove that we had conquered the climb and left due to the icy wind.

We returned to Darlington along the track to the reservoir, looking at the old engine house and the site of the Twelve Apostles, cottages that housed workers. Our roomy, John, then told us that he, George and Jan had left Darlington mid-morning and had gone to the far end of the Painted Cliffs to photograph some sandstone patterns and to see if they could get to some less-visited parts of the cliffs at low tide, which they couldn't. They then went to Howells Point, where there was a possible shell midden and just beyond the Point, they found the dressed stones that Prue had

seen last year. After a late lunch back at the barracks they had then gone to Darlington Bay to photograph the pied oystercatchers and crested terns on the beach.

Following our evening meals, we again played cards in the candle light and talked about our plans for the following day before heading to bed.

On Sunday morning after breakfasting, we packed our gear up and cleaned our rooms which we had to vacate prior to setting off for our activities. Prue, Ann, Noel, Karl and I headed toward the Painted Cliffs to explore during the afternoon low tide.



We walked along Hopground Beach finding some interesting seaweeds and grasses, and a small dead penguin. We continued up onto the cliff and walked past the Painted Cliffs checking all the little bays as we went. We slid down an embankment into one of these bays to find the sandstone had beautiful red and brown markings in it and spent some time photographing them, while Karl climbed up into the cliff where he found a few little caves formed in the sandstone. We walked further around the headland and saw a large number of rectangular chunks of rock laying on the shore which had been carved out of the cliffs. Prue had reported seeing these during last years trip. We wondered if convicts with primitive tools had carved these rocks and why they had not been utilised.

With low tide approaching

we headed back to the beach next to the Painted Cliffs and sat on the large flat rocks and ate our lunch in the sunshine. We could see John walking along the beach toward us, during the morning he had returned to Darlington Bay and had photographed the pied oystercatchers again and was now heading back to Howells Point and the Painted Cliffs and would catch up with us later. He had left George and Jan at Darlington photographing the ruins and equipment within.

Lunch eaten, we investigated the rockpools and the crevices in the rocks, where we found an abundance of waratah and striped anemones, small sea stars and sea lettuce. The rocks and crevices were covered in barnacles, limpets, flea mussels and tube worms, with snakeskin chitons and welks in the rockpools. The sandstone cliffs further around were stunning with their “painted” patterns. Noel noticed the sky had darkened and rain approaching from Orford which prompted a return to Darlington. We hurried back along the beach and up over a hill rather than around the roadway to save time.

With the rain came the wind which pushed us up the hill. The rain didn't last long and soon the sun was out again and we dried off fairly quickly. The rain however hung around the hills for some time after it hit us so we stayed at Darlington. Following hot drinks and a delicious lemon cake provided by Prue, we filled in time by visiting the Commissariat Store, Smith O'Brien's Cottage and the Coffee Palace to learn more about the way of life during the earlier years of settlement, while others stayed by the fire in the large mess hall.

We loaded our trolley for the return to the jetty making the mistake of setting off too early and ending up on the exposed jetty in cold, windy conditions. Another rough trip on the boat with no seals as seen the previous year and little in the way of sea birds. The rest of the trip home was mostly in the dark with four of us stopping at Campbell Town for our evening meal.

Karen Manning



Ann sent the above image taken at Hopground Beach of a red growth on a seaweed to David Maynard at QVMAG asking for information to which he replied "photograph identifications are always tricky. Assuming the brown algae is relatively fresh, I think the red organism is a colony of bryozoans. The colony is made up of hundreds of zooids, each filtering the water for small particles of food. Bryozoans are extremely diverse and there is no way of identifying this organism without dissection"

The following were recorded during our trip

**Flora** ~ *Acacia dealbata*, silver wattle; *Acacia melanoxylon*, blackwood; *Acacia verticillata*, prickly moses; *Allocasuarina verticillata*, drooping sheoak; *Astroloma humifusum*, native cranberry; *Banksia marginata*, silver banksia; *Bedfordia salicina*,

Tasmanian blanketleaf; *Bursaria spinosa*, prickly box; *Carpobrotus rossii*, pink pigface; *Clematis aristata*, mountain clematis; *Coprosma quadrifida*, native currant; *Correa reflexa*, common correa; *Corybas* sp., helmet orchid; *Cyathodes glauca*, handsome cheeseberry; *Epacris impressa*, common heath; *Eucalypt* sp., gum; *Exocarpos cupressiformis*, native cherry; *Hakea lissosperma*, mountain needlebush; *Leptecophylla juniperina*, pinkberry; *Leucopogon parviflorus*, coast beard-heath; *Lissanthe* sp., peachberry; *Olearia lirata*, shrubby daisybush; *Pomaderris apetala*, rough dogwood; *Richea dracophylla*, dragon candle heath; *Tasmanian lanceolata*, mountain pepper; *Usnea* sp., old man's beard; *Wahlenbergia stricta*, tall bluebell; *Zieria arborescens*, stinkwood

**Fungi** ~ *Amanita* sp.; *Lichenomphalina* sp.; *Postia* sp.; *Stereum illudens*, leathery shelf fungi

**Mammals** ~ *Macropus giganteus*, eastern grey kangaroo; *Thylogale billardierii*, Tasmanian pademelon; *Vombatus ursinus*, common wombat

**Amphibians** ~ *Pseudophryne semimarmorata*, southern toadlet

**Birds** ~ *Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*, yellow-rumped thornbill; *Acanthiza pusilla*, brown thornbill; *Anas castanea*, chestnut teal; *Anas superciliosa*, pacific black duck; *Aquila audux*, wedge-tailed eagle; *Carduelis carduelis*, European goldfinch; *Cereopsis novae-hollandiae*, Cape Barren goose; *Corvus tasmanicus*, forest raven; *Dacelo novaeguineae*, laughing kookaburra; *Egretta novaehollandiae*, white-faced heron; *Eudyptula minor*, little penguin; *Fulica atra*, eurasian coot; *Gallinula mortierii*, Tasmanian native hen; *Gymnorhina tibicen*, Australian magpie; *Haematopus fuliginosus*, sooty oystercatcher; *Haematopus longirostris*, pied oystercatcher; *Haliaeetus leucogaster*, white-bellied sea eagle; *Larus novaehollandiae*, silver gull; *Larus pacificus*, pacific gull; *Lichenostomus flavicollis*, yellow-throated honeyeater; *Pardalotus punctatus*, spotted pardalote; *Pardalotus quadragintus*, striated pardalote; *Petroica multicolor*, scarlet robin; *Petroica phoenicea*, flame robin; *Phalacrocorax melanoleucos*, little black cormorant; *Phylidonyros novaehollandiae*, New Holland honeyeater; *Phylidonyros pyrrhoptera*, crescent honeyeater; *Platycercus caledonicus*, green rosella; *Sericornis frontalis*, white-browed scrubwren; *Sterna bergii*, crested tern; *Strepera fuliginosa*, black currawong; *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*, Australasian grebe; *Thinornis rubricollis*, hooded plover

**Seashore life** ~ *Actinia tenebrosa*, waratah anemone; *Anthothoe albocincta*, white striped anemone; *Oulactis muscosa*, shellgrit anemone; *Catomerus polymerus*, surf barnacle; *Chthamalus antennatus*, high tide rock barnacle; *Austrolittorina unifasciata*, banded australwink; ? *Cellana solida*, orange-edged limpet; *Cominella lineolata*, lined welk; *Limnoperna pulex*, flea mussel; *Siphonaria funiculata*, corded siphon shell; *Sypharochiton pelliserpentis*, snakeskin chiton; *Coralline* algae; *Hormosira banksia*, Neptune's necklace; *Parvulastra exigua*, small seastars in blue-green and pinkish; *Polycheate* tubes; sea squirts; *Ulva* sp., sea lettuce

## **FIELD TRIP ~ Sunday 24 August: Geology in the Poatina area**

Departing Launceston this morning it was raining and cold, but finding some marine fossils obviously appealed to the fifteen members who attended. Arriving at the Poatina

Village at 10.00am we waited for our host Peter Wilson from the Hydro to meet us. After an introduction, Peter talked to us about access to our destination and a few rules about our visit, and what he needed to do to ensure our safety, we then followed him to the Poatina Power Station, a short distance away.

Parking opposite the Information Centre, we got out our tools and followed him down a dirt road to the rear of the many work buildings. The buildings had been constructed on the pile of discard which had been removed from the shaft of the tunnel that travels down to the underground power station.

We were told that we would find marine fossils in this pile. The rock was very crumbly and didn't need much persuasion with the picks to open up, sometimes revealing shell and other fossils. Everyone found a fossil of some sort, in many cases they were just lying on top of the ground. A group chipped away at a rather large, hard rock looking for something different and Noel was rewarded with two exceptional specimens.

During this time a light rain continued and with a few fossils in hand some members headed back to the warmth of their cars. Once everyone had returned, Peter Wilson opened the Information Centre and told us the history of the power station, how it works and how it fits into the Tasmanian power grid. He then answered many questions which included queries about the impact of solar panels on the Hydro and the continual supply of power.

We then drove up toward the top of the mountain, pulling up on the roadside where there was some interesting rock formations and a fast running stream. We saw silver banksia, small gum trees and common pinkberry in the parking area, which had large clusters of deep red berries. From here we travelled up to Great Lake in thick fog and were only able to see a short way over the edge from the parking area. At present the water level in the lake is low, so the Hydro has shut down production and is undertaking maintenance in all sections of the production line.

Although we had not stopped for a scheduled lunch break, most members had their lunch either at the Power Station or during our roadside stop. With a light rain still coming down and the prospects of not seeing a great deal in the thick fog, we decided to head back to the Poatina Chalet where they were expecting us, hoping that there was a warm fire to dry us off. After a hot drink, something sweet and a chat we all headed for home.

A very big thank you to Peter Ralph for organising such a day, including having the Chalet open for afternoon tea, and for arranging Peter Wilson who not only opened gates but also gave an informative talk on the Hydro scheme in the area.

Karen Manning

The following were recorded during our trip.

**Flora** ~ *Acacia dealbata*, silver wattle; *Acacia melanoxylon*, blackwood; *Banksia marginata*, silver banksia; *Bedfordia salicina*, Tasmanian blanketleaf; *Coprosma hirtella*, coffeeberry; *Epacris impressa*, common heath; *Eucalyptus* sp., gums; *Exocarpos cupressiformis*, common native-cherry; *Leptecophylla juniperina*, common pinkberry; *Ozothamnus* sp., everlastingbush; *Senecio* sp.

**Birds** ~ *Cacatua* sp., white cockatoo; *Dacelo novaeguineae*, laughing kookaburra; *Petroica* sp., robin; *Strepera fuliginosa*, black currawong

**Miscellaneous** ~ *Lycosidae* sp., wolf spider; ? *Philaemon* sp., leech

**SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING ~ SPEAKER ~ Dr Tanya Bailey**  
*Eucalypt Regeneration in the Midlands*

Noel gave a brief introduction to Tanya who was to talk on a major project of regeneration in the Midlands. Tanya expanding on the introduction before explaining that she was not a geneticist rather more an ecologist then moving on to introduce the people mentioned in the first slide. These were Dr Achana Gauli, a PhD student who recently completed her degree, Peter Harrison another PhD student studying *E. ovata*, Dr Neil Davidson her PhD supervisor and Professor Brad Potts her immediate boss.

Tanya showed us a slide of dead trees and told us that this is how she starts talks as this was the inspiration for the project and that she could not believe how dry the Midlands are. We learnt that 90% of the estimated 40,000 Ha of pre-settlement woodlands in Tasmania are gone.

The fragmentation of the woodlands has other effects such as altered nutrient cycling, habitat loss and erosion. An impressive picture of a tree suspended above a river bank demonstrated the erosion.

There are also genetic effects as offspring can lose the fitness to grow with such things as inbreeding, genetic drift and the greater likelihood of hybrids.

Tanya posed the question of how to restore these communities and stated that using trees sourced locally was the accepted method as these are better adapted. Traditional methodology, according to Florabank guidelines, is to establish what is local provenance including distance from target site and ecological criteria. Seeds are then collected from between 10 to 20 individual trees to get a good genetic cross section.

There are problems with local provenance, using individual trees which are scattered very widely, due to the likelihood of inbreeding, genetic depauperate trees and the high cost of collecting from small numbers of trees spread over a large area. As well the environment is very different to what it was originally with soil compaction, fertilisation changing the soil community as well as climate change.

The team is doing molecular genetics work and morphological studies, looking at these factors and asking whether local provenance is best, including if in a dryer, warmer local climate the trees would be better sourced from areas of dryer and warmer lower altitude. The work is focused on *Eucalyptus pauciflora* and *E. ovata* with a secondary focus on *E. tenuiramis*, *E. viminalis*, *E. amygdalina* and *E. rodwayi*.

This research is showing results in the first three planting sites from 2010 in the southern Midlands on Dungrove and Grassy Hut in the Bothwell area and Meadowbank near Westerway with 30 Ha on each.

A map showed the 37 sites where *E. pauciflora* seed had been collected from many parts of Tasmania from sea level at South Arm to the highlands. Seed also came from the highlands of Victoria and New South Wales as well as Canberra. Dr Archana Gauli was doing the genetic work which Tanya admitted not knowing much about.

This work is part of Greening Australia Transforming Landscape Project with the aim of linking up patches of remnant bush, enlarging areas of remnant bush and providing demonstration sites. Tanya pointed out that the workers were asked to plant differently from their normal work methods. Where they would expect to plant many

trees per day with this work keeping track of the provenance of the planting was important so that progress could be charted.

Each site has a 130 year covenant on it and plantings were originally started for carbon sequestering even though this is now on hold. The project also uses restoration species rather than timber species such as blue gum.

The next group of slides had charts and graphs showing the progress of tree growth. Lower altitude trees grew faster with a trade-off being greater browsing by animals and insect caused damage. Due to drought and high temperatures at Meadowbank there was more damage to trees sourced from wetter areas while those from dryer low altitudes did well.

A chart showed that Tasmanian populations outperformed those from the mainland while two graphs from populations at Dungleigh showed provenance had different results for two types of tree. The graph showed that for *E. tenuiramis* it was probable that the further from the property the trees were sourced the less well these performed while with *E. pauciflora* this was not necessarily so. The Dungleigh property is at a higher altitude than the other properties and wetter and frost proved to be an issue with *E. pauciflora*.

The talk moved on to the new study of *E. ovata*, black or swamp gum, one of the most widespread species in Tasmania. It was also widespread in the Midlands although it is a threatened community there. Farmers associated *ovata* with fertile sites so these areas were cleared for agriculture. The few remaining trees are fragmented along fence lines and modelling shows *E. ovata* may not survive in the Midlands without help.

Seed of *E. ovata* was collected from 50 different sites and four charts showed the spatial, altitude, temperature and moisture differences for collection sites. In each provenance seed was collected from six to 10 trees along with foliage for DNA studies. Seed is kept separate for each tree so that seedlings can be tracked back to a mother tree. Some of these were collected from sites where *E. pauciflora* had been collected to pair them up to see how they compare in field trials.

As well as Greening Australia, Tasmanian Land Conservancy, Bush Heritage and DPIW (DPIPWE) are involved in restoration and conservation in the Northern Midlands as it is considered to be a biodiversity hot spot in Tasmania.

Three properties are involved with the large holdings of Julian von Bibra and Simon Foster in the Ross area and Roderic O'Connor north of Cressy included. A Google Earth map showed the areas being replanted near Ross including a strip along the Macquarie River and Tanya named other small properties where corridors would be going in. The work on the von Bibra property can be seen on either side of the highway at the bridge across the Macquarie River and some of the smaller property owners have become interested.

MONA will be involved as David Walsh' wife is arranging for art work to be added to the Midlands in conjunction with the planting making it far more visible.

There has been a blow out in the costs as browsing by native animals and deer has been a major issue and resulted in the need for expensive fencing.

Different areas required different planting techniques. Some places looked like commercial tree farms with the rows of mounds in a large fenced area while other more spaced plantings had individual mounds with a small group of trees surrounded

by a fence.

Further slides showed the complexity and scale of the work with the large number of plants being moved to a property and the workers putting them in the ground.

Another slide was of a map of the Bloomfield Wetlands near Ross showing the areas with different types of plantings. There were 3 areas of mixed genetics, *E. pauciflora*, 3 areas of local only *E. pauciflora*, 3 of mixed genetics *E. ovata*, 3 of local only *E. ovata* and 2 with a mix of both species. Eight local species, *E. pauciflora*, *E. ovata*, *E. viminialis*, *E. rodwayi*, *E. amygdalina*, *Acacia dealbata*, *Allocasuarina littoralis* and *Cassinia aculeata*, were planted in small groups throughout the area. As well as these species the broader planting included *Acacia melanoxylon*, *Allacauarina verticilata*, *Leptospermum* spp, *Callistermon* spp, *Melaleuca* spp, *Hakea macrocarpa*, *Dodonea viscosa*, *Bursaria spinosa* and *Banksia marginata* with *Poa*, *Juncus* and *Carex* along the river an grasses directly sown at Connorville. This list of trees was accompanied by a photo of a PhD student hugging the last *E. rodwayi* in the paddock where the planting was being done and Tanya told us that willow, gorse and hawthorn had been removed before the work.

With the aid of maps Tanya showed us the plan of the plantings at Ross and Connorville in more detail. The large number of trees involved, 105,000 plants in the Ross area alone with 50,000 of these going in tomorrow, showed the huge scale of this project. We learnt that in some places the different eucalypts were planted in small spaced groups to study which best suited the areas being planted.

The work so far has yielded useful information with the PhD student, Achana Gauli, using genetics and seed morphology to establish provenance as 27 kilometres for *E. pauciflora*. Those trees inside that distance are more closely related than those outside and for future restoration work seeds will be collected within 30 kilometres of the site.

The last slide showed a montage of various aspects of the work in progress with Archana prominent in the centre bottom of the slide.

Tom thanked her and invited questions. There followed over 25 minutes of question before Tom gave the full thanks and invited members to show their appreciation.

Noel Manning

## **OUTING ~ Saturday 13 September: Marion Simmons' Native Garden**

Twenty members arrived at Marion's late morning to have a look around her native garden. The garden had suffered during the heavy winds in late July, some trees coming down, limbs snapped and plants ripped from the ground or damaged by limbs on the way down. Much of the damage has been cleared and we could see where Marion had started to put replacement plants in.

Her garden had a lot of colour with plants in flower and there were some interesting smells. The more memorable plants were *grevillea*, *acacia*, *boronia*, *correa*, *eucalypt*, *indigofera*, *melaleuca*, *prostanthera* and *eremophila*, of different varieties. Other than weeds, plants in the garden are all Australian native although some are mainland varieties and Marion made special mention of the many Tasmanian natives.

We wandered around the lower parts of the garden, Marion naming plants as we went and telling us where they were from. Working our way back past the house and up to the roadway we saw the damage done by falling limbs and the toll it had taken on individual plants.

Breaking for lunch we sat around the back of the house in a fairly sheltered area. Many chose to sit out in the sun eating lunch and catching up. Before heading to the front garden we talked about afternoon tea and were advised of another local venue which Noel and Tony went to visit. The remaining people strolled around this smaller part of the garden where Marion had also put in some new plants. For lovers of *correa* and *grevillea* the area had many varieties of these plants showing off their striking flowers.

A huge plant in the far corner got everyone talking, it had a large showy lemon flower and large prickly leaves, there were many suggestions as to what it could be., but I can't quite remember if any of the suggestions were correct, Marion named it as a *Dryandra formosa*, a Western Australian plant from the protea family.

The boys returned from their trip into Legana to advise that we were expected at Pages Café for afternoon tea. When we had finished looking over the garden and the frog had ceased entertaining us with its cre-eeek, cre-eeek call (presumably a southern toadlet) we drove to the Legana shopping centre.

At Pages Café, fifteen of us enjoyed hot drinks and slices, and the children, milkshakes and hot chips.

Tom Treloggen then thanked Marion for opening her garden to members.

Karen Manning

## **SKEMP DAY ~ Saturday 20 September: Water Monitoring**

Twelve adult and three junior members arrived at Skemps on a glorious sunny day to undertake the spring water-monitoring and to enjoy a social day.

While we waited for the water sample and its contents to settle, we had a hot drink and a chat and were advised to avoid the top pond area as the lapwings nesting down near the river had swooped on an unsuspecting walker near the pond earlier this morning.

Sitting outside in the semi-shade we sorted through the water sample finding many caddis flies, stoneflies and mayflies. We watched a wedge-tailed eagle soaring around the Bedfordia track area for some time.

Inside Judith set up the microscope with the recently purchased lens attachment. The attachment allows an SLR camera to connect to one of the eyepieces and images can be taken of the specimens under the scope. We looked at some of the critters found in the water sample, admiring their structure and hairy bodies, while Judith experimented with the computer program to obtain the best settings for the images.

The BBQ was lit as usual and once our food was cooked, eight of us ate our lunch at a large table with bench seats which our Myrtle Bank neighbour Murray had kindly donated to the Club. The table looks great in the BBQ shelter and the seating is very comfortable to sit on. Thanks to Peter Warren the table top and seats have been sanded smooth.

Following lunch we decided to take a walk to check recent plantings. The children had run off ahead of us and found an echidna which wasn't happy with all the attention and had started to dig itself in. At the site of the recent Planet Ark planting along the river we checked how the plants were doing and also looked at other trees, discussing alternative methods of protecting them from grazing animals while they

became better established.

Arriving back at the Centre late in the afternoon, we found that Noel and John had completed a few tasks while we were gone and our junior members who returned a little ahead of the adults had squeezed lemons and made 'lemonade' for everyone to enjoy, after which we packed up and headed home after an great day.

Seen at Skemps today:- *Crinia tasmaniensis*, Tasmanian froglet; Stick insect; ? *Accipiter novaehollandiae*, grey goshawk; *Aquila audux*, wedge-tailed eagle; *Corvus tasmanicus*, forest raven; *Dacelo novaeguineae*, laughing kookaburra; *Hirundo neoxena*, welcome swallow; ? *Pardalotus striatus*, striated pardalote; ? *Strepera versicolour*, grey currawong; *Vanellus novaehollandiae*, masked lapwing; *Tachyglossus aculeatus*, echidna; *Thylogale billardierii*, Tasmanian pademelon.

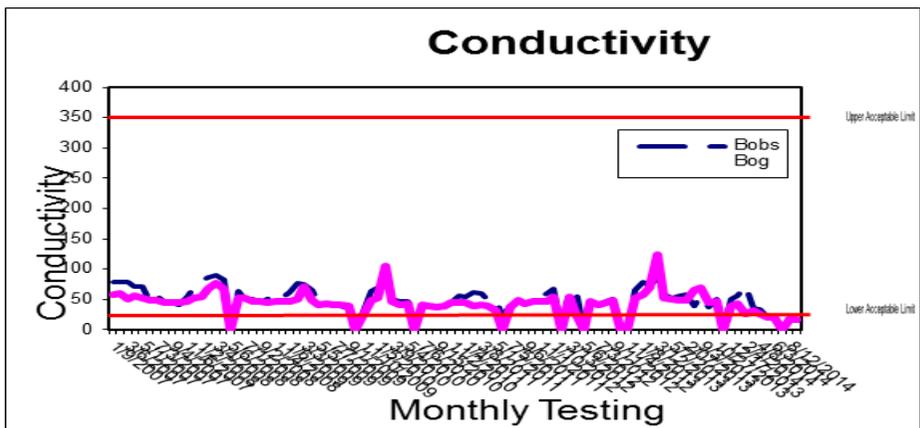
### Macroinvertebrate Monitoring and Conductivity /Turbidity Summary by John Elliott

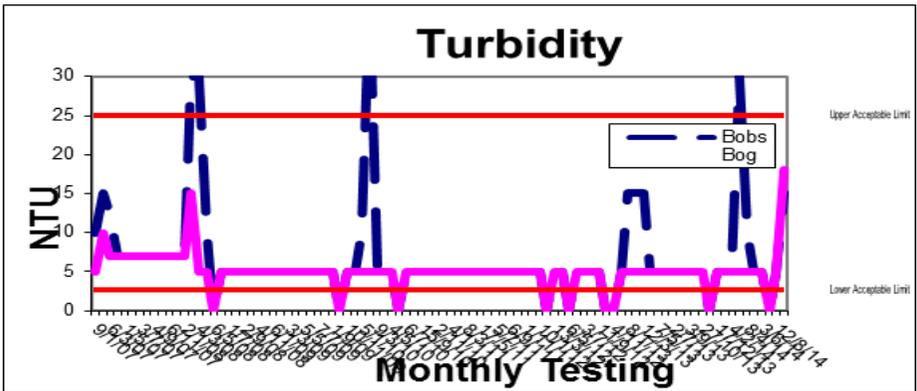
Overall, with 8 species found and a Signal 2 Score of 6.3, the result is consistent with most of the other results from this site, which cluster around the boundary between excellent water quality and good water quality.

The following taxa were seen:

Coleoptera	Beetles
Diptera	True flies(eg chironomids, blackflies)
Ephemeroptera	Mayflies
Hemiptera	True bugs (Backswimmers, Veliidae)
Mecoptera	Scorpionflies
Odonata	Dragonflies
Plecoptera	Stoneflies
Trichoptera	Caddisflies

### Conductivity and Turbidity Results





As these graphs show, the conductivity (“salinity”) results and turbidity results for both sites have basically stayed within acceptable limits.

### NEW BOOK AVAILABLE Mt Stronach Walks ~ Scottsdale

Mike Douglas has advised that he has a new publication available. It contains descriptions of seven excursions, with detailed maps and brief descriptions of the vegetation and geology.

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of this publication they are available at the Pavilion in Bridport for \$8.00, Scottsdale Art Gallery Café for \$9.00 or alternatively, Mike is happy to mail them for \$10.00 which includes postage. If you would like to receive a copy by mail, send you details, including a cheque made out to ‘Mike Douglas’ to 2 West Street Bridport 7262

### FEDERATION GATHERING - Friday 7 to Sunday 9 November 2014

The Burnie Field Naturalists Club has advised that they will host this event. Program details are (please note changes to Friday and Saturday evenings meals from original information).

**Friday evening meal** will be a BYO BBQ held in the barn in the grounds of the Two Oaks Café (Beachside Caravan Park). Salads and slices provided. This will be followed by an illustrated talk by David Cooper on the amazingly varied geology of Wynyard.

**Saturday** David Cooper will conduct a tour of the various geological sites from Table Cape and Fossil Bluff to East Wynyard and Doctors Rocks. Orchid expert, Barry Dudman will lead a trip to either Rocky Cape or Fernglade, whichever has the best orchids. Note that the tides will decide the time of both walks.

**Saturday evening** dining at Beijing Chinese (and other foods) restaurant in Somerset, at own expense.

**Sunday** visit Lobster Ponds, Flowerdale, to see the giant Freshwater Crayfish (entry

\$5), then drive to Heybridge to visit Margaret Kinsey's famous garden of Australian native plants. BYO lunch (tea and coffee provided)

**Accommodation:** they have chosen Somerset Beachside Cabin and Caravan Park as there is a variety of accommodation.

Cabins (2 rooms) sleep 6: Double bedroom with ensuite, 2 bunks and a sofa bed in main room, towel, soap and bedclothes provided. Single person \$80, 2 persons sharing double bed \$85, two persons sleeping in separate rooms \$95, extra persons \$15 each.

Caravans and camp sites: Powered site \$27 per 2 adults, Unpowered site \$20 per 2 adults, Kitchen and toilets open 24/7, lounge-room.

You will need to take provisions for breakfasts, lunches and evening meals (if not attending the evening gatherings) and arrange accommodation direct with Somerset Beachside (ph 6435 2322).

Please email Barbara at [bekayee@gmail.com](mailto:bekayee@gmail.com) if you are attending and advise if you are attending the evening meals and talk.

## **AUSTRALIAN PLANT SOCIETY (APS) MEETINGS**

LFNC members are welcome to attend APS meetings held on a Tuesday at Max Fry Hall, Gorge Road Trevallyn at 7.30 pm. The next meetings will be on:

**October 21** ~ Guest Speaker: Mark Wapstra ~ *Finding a Botanical Lazarus: Tasmanian plants risen from the dead*

**November 18** ~ Guest Speaker: Simon Fearn ~ *Insect friendly gardens*

**Plant Sale** ~ The APS will hold their spring native plant sale at the Max Fry Hall on Saturday 11 October from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. The plants, propagated by APS members and grown at the APS nursery are available at very reasonable prices.

**Excursions** ~ Members are also invited to joint APS members on the following two excursions for which Roy Skabo has provided the following information. If you are interested in attending, contact Roy on 6334 6787 to confirm dates and for address details.

- A beautiful bush block on private land between Conara and Avoca. The owner is happy for us to visit the land and I think a visit in late October or early November would be great: lots of orchids, wildflowers etc. I suggest Saturday October 25 or Sunday 26 (or a weekday trip would be good but only for those of us who are retired)
- Saturday 15 November ~ Members can participate in a survey of a property at Breadalbane with Threatened Plants Tasmania. This is a great opportunity for people to go out in the bush with one of Tasmania's top botanists, Dr Richard Schahinger, and learn a great deal and at the same time help with the survey. No doubt a few species will be targeted and people will be briefed at the beginning of the survey. It will be very interesting and enjoyable but people must be willing to assist with the survey.

## **QVMAG EXHIBITIONS**

### **Australian Geographic ANZANG Nature Photographer of the Year**

An annual competition which encourages photography of nature and wilderness in Australia, New Zealand, Antarctica and the New Guinea region. Entries are open to local and international photographers.

### **Wildlife Photographer of the Year**

Featuring 100 powerful images, the exhibition showcases striking photographs of wildlife and nature from around the world. The photographs exhibited are increasingly important for the way they highlight pressing environmental issues such as animal extinction and destruction of natural landscapes.

Both exhibitions are on between: 6 September to 26 October 2014 at QVMAG, Inveresk and admission is free.

The following activity will be of interest to parents of our junior members and to members with grandchildren.

### **Bug Day Out**

On the **26 October 2014** the Bug Day Out theme is 'Things that sting'. Admission is free. Don't forget to BYO bug - but not the stinging type! To reserve your place to these very popular science club sessions, which run from 1pm to 3pm at the QVMAG Museum, Inveresk please call 6323 3798 or email [bookings@qvmag.tas.gov.au](mailto:bookings@qvmag.tas.gov.au)

Source: [www.qvmag.tas.gov.au/](http://www.qvmag.tas.gov.au/)

## **Additional Information**

### **Club Outings:**

1. All outings depart from Inveresk carpark (near Museum entrance) at 9 am unless otherwise specified. Internet site updated regularly to reflect short notice changes. Saturday all-day parking cost is \$3.00. Sunday parking free.
2. You need to provide your own food and drinks for the outing unless otherwise specified. Morning tea is normally provided by the bus company on bus outings.
3. When travelling by car in convoy, each driver is responsible to ensure that the vehicle behind is in sight immediately after passing each cross road or fork in the road.
4. When car pooling, petrol costs should be shared between all the passengers, including family of the driver, and based on other clubs the Committee suggested \$11 per 100 km. This is a guideline only.

**Name Tags:** Name tags are to be worn at meetings and on outings.

**Tea/Coffee:** A levy of 50c is currently charged for supper provided at meetings.

**Field Centre:** All members have access to the John Skemp Field Centre. Contact our booking manager, John Elliott on 6344 9303 regarding availability and keys.

**Field Centre Phone Number** ~ 6399 3361

**Postal Address:** PO Box 1072 Launceston 7250

**Internet site :** <http://www.lfnc.org.au>

**E.mail :** [secretary@lfnc.org.au](mailto:secretary@lfnc.org.au)