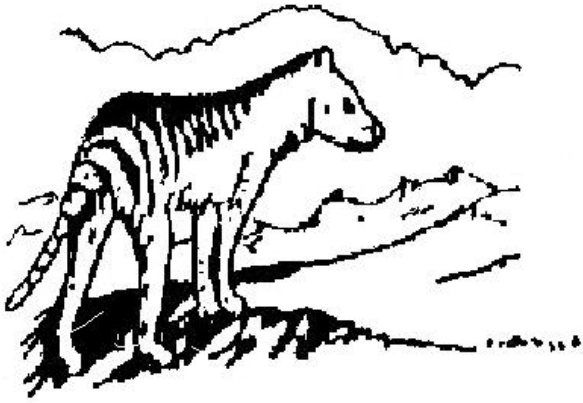
THE LAUNCESTON NATURALIST

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

Volume XLVI No . 3 **February/March 2013**

Meetings 1st Tuesday of month, Feb-Dec at Scotch-Oakburn College, Penquite Rd Newstead

PROGRAM

APRIL

Tuesday 2	**General Meeting - Speaker: Simon Fearn - *Invasive species***
Sunday 7	**Field Trip: Jackeys Marsh with CNFNC for fungi and ferns, meet Inveresk carpark at 8.30am for 8.40am departure (Please note change of date)**
Saturday 27	**Skemp Day - Water Monitoring**

MAY

Tuesday 7	**John Skemp Memorial Lecture Guest Speaker: John Tongue - *Birdline Tasmania and non Tasmanian bird species***
Saturday 18	**Field Trip: Georgetown Wildlife Sanctuary & East Beach - *Birds* (Please note change of date)**
Sunday 26	**Open Day at Skemps - participating in National Trust Heritage Festival**

JUNE

Tuesday 4	**General Meeting - Guest speaker: Sabatino Cesile - *Quarantine***
Saturday 15	**Field Trip: Tamar Island - *Local birds and introduced gambusia* and Queechy Park - *Birds***
Sunday 23	**Skemp Day - Fungi and ferns**

For short notice changes visit

http://www.lfnc.org.au/meetings.htm

COMMITTEE/GENERAL MEETING

Skemp Report

There is no construction being undertaken at Skemps. Work consists almost exclusively of mowing, clearing tracks, minor maintenance and cutting, splitting and stacking of fire wood. The ride on mower broke down on 12 March, a burnt inlet valve, and is at a mechanics awaiting repairs. The chainsaw broke down as well and is not worth repairing and the Committee is currently looking into the replacement, probably something either heavy duty or bigger. There are a few trees down along the tracks and we need assistance to clear them. During a recent working bee six members went to Skemps to clean the plant identification signs and these look a lot better. All the mattresses in the Centre have been replaced and the old ones have been disposed of.

Puggle

February - Lynne Mockridge provided an image of a butterfly that she had seen at the Vale of Belvoir and asked members to identify it? Noel Manning correctly identified the butterfly as a Shouldered Brown.

March - Noel Manning asked members both names of the land burrowing crayfish at Skemps. Jeff gave both answers, *Engaeus orramakunna* and Mt Arthur Burrowing Crayfish. For the second question Noel asked who discovered the Skemps snail and Simon Fearn said Kevin Bonham. When pressed for a reason for such a quick answer he said that he had guessed as Kevin was the only snail expert that he knew. Simon also gave some information on jewel beetles and agreed to do a puggle next month.

Sightings

February - Peter Warren had seen two copperheads near the boardwalks at the Tamar Wetlands Centre. He had also seen a large flock of silver gulls feeding on sugar ants above the Trevallyn Power Station. Neil Hardstaff told of his very close encounter with a wedge-tailed eagle on the Strathgordon Road. When Peter Ralph investigated his dog going crazy recently he found a short-tailed blue-tongue feeding on snails in his garden and also reported a ring-tailed possum in his vegie garden. Jeff Campbell reported a green praying mantis with a yellow stripe on it. Maureen Johnstone reported pelicans feeding on eels at the Tailrace. Noel Manning reported a brown falcon hovering along the roadside of the Midlands Highway and two hunting near Lake Arthur. Tina McGlynn had seen a pair of Latham's snipes at Westwood and John Elliott had seen an echidna at the corner of Wentworth & Talbot Roads in Newstead.

March - Peter Longman reported dozens of silver-eyes and thorn bills at Heritage Forest. Tom Treloggen reported a silver gull rookery near the Boatshed opposite the Sea Port. Alison Green reported that a large population of pademelons had moved in to Hawley Beach. Simon Fearn showed a portfolio of large format photographs of a common wolf spider that had been driven from its burrow by ants. Daphne Longman spoke about a young magpie that has a broken upper and lower beak that is frequently in their garden.

General

New members Simon Fearn and his daughters Maggie and Sophie were welcomed to the Club. Simon was present to collect their members kit, we look forward to them joining us at Club activities.

Time Team Dig members were reminded of the archaeological dig at Skemps on Saturday 23 March, where two teams would dig in marked areas for items relating to the old homestead. The house site would also be mapped.

Steve's Grill Social Evening members were reminded that RSVP was required by Thursday 21 March for this social night which is being held on Monday 25 March.

Mattresses at the John Skemp Field Centre all the old mattresses at the Centre have been replaced.

GENERAL MEETING - Guest Speaker Simon Fearn - Snakes

Tom Treloggen introduced Simon Fearn to the meeting and the questions started immediately as members were curious about his job of removing feral wallabies from the east coast. The introduced agile wallabies escaped from Nature World Wildlife Park at Bicheno during a fire and are presently confined to the beach strip between the park and Bicheno. As the introduced wallaby can produce offspring with Bennett's wallaby they pose a threat if they get into the Douglas-Apsley National Park and other areas with large populations of this wallaby.

Before his talk Simon was contributing to the meeting by pointing out that the seagulls seen near the Trevallyn power station were feeding on winged sugar ants which had flown up in large numbers to mate.

We heard how his fascinations with snakes and reptiles and creepy crawlies started by observing the snakes at the Punchbowl Zoo and that some of his field studies have been published. He was then invited to join a research program looking at (Mount) Chappell Island's, a little island off Flinders, extremely dense population of giant tiger snakes. On average these snakes grow to 1.6 metres and can be up to 2 metres. They eat mainly mutton birds during the short nesting season and starve for the rest of the year and hence grow very large in order to store lots of fat.

Simon moved to Queensland, finished his university degree and started to study a variety of tropical snakes in a professional way, most notably pythons. He studied a carpet python in Brisbane which is a pest as it gobbles up pets, mainly aviary birds but also cats and small dogs. In northern Queensland he studied the giant scrub python, one of the world's largest snakes, growing up to six metres or 20 feet in old speak. He spent four years scrabbling around in the jungle of Tully Gorge where you can see many of these huge snakes mating on the rocks during the dry season.

Simon told us that although Tasmania had only the three types of snakes; from his work with snakes all up the east coast of Australia, that we have the highest snake densities per square mile anywhere in the country. At a lagoon on the Thomas property at Leslie Vale he was studying snakes and found 3,000 copperheads in a 2.5 kilometre section of coast.

There followed some slides of copperhead snakes which demonstrated the variety in the colouring, including one with a particularly orange side which turned up in only a few places in the south and on King Island. On one slide he pointed out a distinctive central shield on the head of the copperhead and amused us by saying that it was of little use unless you had both a copperhead and a tiger snake in your hand. Instead we should note that only the copperhead had the distinctive copper colour down the side, was a dull charcoal black while the tiger snake is shiny, never has any bands of colour across the body and that the head is generally lighter in colour than the body.

Another slide showed a jet black tiger snake from Lake Crescent in the central highlands. Simon explained that most highland tiger snakes were dark and this was probably to heat up faster in the colder conditions. Also, that tiger snakes from the highland areas tended to have larger scales and the reason for this was not known.

In total contrast the next slide was of a bright yellow tiger snake from the Deloraine area. The yellow ones are rare and Simon had seen most in the foot hills of the Western Tiers where the snakes blend in well with the leaf litter. The wide variety of colouring in these snakes caused confusion for over 100 years as there was much debate as to how many types of snakes lived in Tasmania. Further slides showed tiger snakes with a grey to olive green colouring which are common in the midlands and another of a silvery colour with a white underside and the bands reduced to dark speckles. Simon pointed out that tiger snakes have a head that is darker than the body and the last tiger snake slide showed the more classic tiger with the distinctive bands that give it its name.

The slides then moved onto the white-lipped snake, sometimes called a whip snake although it is not in that family of snakes. These grow to around 600 mm and feed almost exclusively on skinks. They have a solid colouring which is usually an olive green but can be jet black or orange and they all have the pure white stripe on the upper lip.

A slide showed a group of snakes at an enclosure at Simon's with copperheads and tiger snakes in together to demonstrate the obvious differences. The lighter head colouring of the copperhead and darker head colouring of the tiger when compared to the body colour, while the tiger has shiny scales and the copperhead has a matt finish to its colour and the distinctive head shield of the copperhead snake. As the copperhead went into the water frequently to get frogs the matt finish may allow it to heat up faster while the gloss finish on the tiger snake would allow it to forage in the sun and not get too hot.

Another slide showed a tiger snake from Chappell Island with very similar sized scales with an animal from Lake Sorell having scales twice the size, in uneven rows with the odd large or small one jammed in. Next we saw a copperhead from where we will go for the field trip and it was, at 1.5 metres, about as big as these get. Simon pointed out that the copperhead is the more powerful snake and at any given size always heavier than the tiger. Stories of snakes over 1.8 metres being common are just not true except on Chappell Island. The largest female tiger snake ever recorded came from the Wesley Vale Pulp Mill pine plantation in 1979 and was 1.78 metres and weighed 2.2 kilos. In all his years of looking the largest tiger snake Simon has caught was 1.73 metres or 5' 8" in old speak.

A slide showed a picture of Dennis Chilcott with the biggest snake Simon has ever encountered on the main island. At 5' 11.5" it is the longest reliable measured

snake ever seen in Tasmania. Another slide showed a tiger snake from Chappell Island which was well over 6 foot and would be 50 years old while at 1.63 metres the next snake was the biggest he has captured during recent studies. It was also the heaviest at 1.7 kilograms and contained a 300 gram brush-tailed possum. It was living in a rabbit burrow near the gravel road where it was photographed at South Nietta. Another slide showed a supposedly 12 foot tiger snake which was actually held in front of the person in the photo using a trick of perspective to make it look large. The story was on social media a few years ago and the Advocate featured the story for some time.

Simon talked about his curiosity as to how tiger and copperheads could coexist without competing and his theory is that they have different prey. A slide showed a spring fed farm dam surrounded by open grasslands and he stated that this was typical copperhead territory with another showing a copperhead near the edge of the dam looking for tadpoles and frogs and yet another cruising the rushes at Four Springs Lake at Selbourne looking for frogs. The next showed a typical tiger snake home site with a pile of rocks on the edge of a paddock and next to bush with Simon telling us that the rocks would nearly always have tiger snakes. The rocks heat up during the day and cool slowly helping the snake to maintain body temperature.

Further slides showed some of the frogs with Simon listing banjo frogs and spotted marsh frogs among the copperheads favourite food and another showed a snake which had spent 20 minutes swimming in a dam catching tadpoles.

Simon is often asked if snakes eat other snakes and he showed a slide of a copperhead eating another snake of similar size. He then went on to tell us that large tiger snakes have very large heads, up to three times the size of the head of a copperhead and that this was so they can eat larger prey, including rabbits, bandicoots or any bird or animal up to 300 or 400 grams. We saw pictures of a tiger snake with injuries from rats as the rats will turn and bite when attacked and another showed a snake eating a large rat. One tiger had 21 rat bites and he told a story of a mother rat successfully defending her brood from a snake attack. In another a tiger was eating a ringtail possum and Simon pointed out that the snakes lower jaw is attached with elastic ligament which allowed it to open up as well as drop down so that the rather small head could easily swallow a surprisingly large prey. In the field it is possible to force a snake to regurgitate its food to note and weigh what it is eating. A picture of a road kill showed the large amount of fat the snakes store ready for the winter torpor.

The mutton bird chicks will hatch at around 64 grams and be 500 grams five weeks later and a large Chappell Island snake will eat seven or eight chicks in a season with the larger ones able to swallow the bigger chicks. Simon saw one snake with three 400 gram mutton bird chicks in it. He also noted tiger snakes eating trout and galaxias at Penstock Lagoon and one had eaten an eel and snakes will live in the earth walls of dams and lay at the edge of the water waiting for fish.

Simon digressed to give us information on the cane toad of northern Queensland. He stated that there is no reduction in native animals as they soon learn to leave toads alone. Rats have learnt to catch and kill a toad then turn it over, break the skin of the stomach and eat the harmless organs. The toad is not a big problem in Queensland but it is in Western Australia where the local animals are yet to fully adapt.

We then saw pictures of pregnant snakes and new born snakes with Simon stating that over 60 can be born to one snake which then takes no further interest in them. The baby snakes have to fend for themselves and are preyed upon by many animals

including wolf spiders and frogs.

As it takes so much of her energy to give birth the female snakes only mate once every two or three years and the bigger males fight for the limited number of females available. Simon showed a picture of two tiger snakes intertwined and told us that everyone thought they were mating. It was in fact two males fighting for the right to mate with a female and the fight could last for hours if the snakes were evenly matched. They did not bite as they were immune to the poison and would not risk breaking a fang. When one finally got the others head to the ground he had won and the loser would slink off.

There followed some information and pictures of mating and of the double hemipenes of the snake which are stored in the longer tail of the male snake. The most popular theory on why they have two is that it saves the male from deciding which side of the female he is going to crawl up on and still do what he has to do.

There followed a lengthy question and answer session with Simon saying that yes he had been bitten several times when he was young and stupid through very careless handling and he has not been bitten for many years in his own words 'since I grew up'. We also learnt that snakes will hunt on warm nights, although this is rare in Tasmania, he has been called out around 2am for a snake trying to enter a house. As the questions continued, Simon brought out snakes from his own collection to show us as well as to demonstrate some of the things that he had been talking about, especially as relates to the various identification details on the copperhead and tiger snakes. Simon arranged for us to meet at the Pipers River shop at 8:30 on the Sunday morning for the field trip.

Tina McGlynn thanked Simon for his fascinating talk.

Noel Manning

FIELD TRIP - Sunday 10 February - Tam O'Shanter Lagoon with Simon Fearn

Meeting at the Museum a little earlier than usual, we departed to rendezvous with Simon Fearn at the Pipers River Store at 8.30 am on the first day of the Chinese year of the snake. After Simon introduced us to Joe Dowde who had assisted him with snake research in the past, we headed to a lagoon near the Tam O'Shanter golf club.

Leaving our cars we walked through thick scrub to the lagoon where we encountered an electric fence which our hosts helped us over. Walking around the right hand side of the lagoon we gave Simon and Joe a head start, not wanting to frighten the snakes off with the vibration of fourteen pair of feet. Simon's first find got away, but it wasn't long before Joe caught the first copperhead, *Austrelaps superbus*, which was quite dark with the lovely reddish colour down its sides.

Simon demonstrated what he would usually do in the field, showing how to relax the snake to ensure an accurate measurement. Two measurements are taken, the first from vent to tip of tail, the second from vent to tip of snout. The snake was then placed in a bag and weighed. This male snake measured 1.3 metres and weight 1050 grams. Snakes are micro chipped as well, which enables researchers to plot growth rates and location of the snake if they come across it in the future. There has been no research in Tasmania regarding the age of snakes.

We were told many interesting facts; snakes living in coastal areas feed longer

than the highland snakes which have a shorter feeding season due to the colder conditions; snakes don't hear they feel vibration and can also smell scent trails from other snakes and prey; males have a home range of around two hectares, while the female home range is less; male snakes will fight over a female, the first male snake to have its head pushed to the ground is the loser and will break off the contact and slink away.

Simon advised us he would release the snake and that we were not to move. It would not bite us as it was more interested in returning to where it had been. The snake was released, it looked about briefly and after bumping up against Jeff Campbell's boot, it slid between his legs and off into the undergrowth near its home.

Walking around the top end of the lagoon, Simon caught another copperhead; this one was male but shorter than the last, a charcoal black colour with red sides. This snake had a spirometra growth which Simon explained was a tapeworm. The larva of the tapeworm enters a host, in this case a snake, and when the host is eaten by another animal the tapeworm's life cycle is complete. Again the snake was released with us all standing completely still, this time the snake rolled over the top of Roy Skabo's boot and headed for cover.

A third copperhead was caught which had a female tic attached to it; Simon removed the tic which was found to be gorged with eggs.

A member asked Simon "why do snakes die', his answer was that snakes die due to drought, misadventure, fires, parasitic diseases and also septicaemia when prey goes off in their stomachs. Copperheads eat other snakes and amphibians and live around boggy areas which dry up, whereas Tiger snakes eat small mammals and birds and therefore have a larger home range for food and can move their territory if circumstances require it.

Back at the cars, Simon showed us a small tiger snake which he and Jo had for relocation. It had been found not long after birth and Simon had been raising it to release; at its current size it had eaten three skinks and was approximately 30 centimetres. When the tiger snake left a scat in the box, Simon showed us the skink scales in the faeces.

Judith Handlinger thanked Simon and Joe for accompanying us, our close encounter with these reptiles and the information gained gave us a greater appreciation for snakes.

We travelled back to Weymouth and lunched at a small picnic area on the bank of Pipers River in the shade of *Acacia mearnsii*, Black wattles and *Acacia melanoxylon*, Blackwoods; the shade a welcome relief after walking around the lagoon in the beating sun.

Birds, Insects and Plants at Tam O'Shanter Lagoon

Anas castanea, Chestnut Teal; *Calyptorhynchus funereus*, Yellow-tailed black cockatoo; *Charadrius ruficapillus*, Red-capped Plover; *Circus approximans*, Swamp Harrier; *Coracina novaehollandiae*, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike; *Corvus tasmanicus*, Forest Raven; *Phalacrocorax fuscescens*, Black-faced Cormorant; *Rhipidura fuliginosa*, Grey Fantail; *Vanellus miles*, Masked Lapwing

Campion sp., Mantis lacewing; Robber flies

Acacia longifolia subsp sophorae, Coast Wattle; *Acacia terminalis*, Sunshine Wattle; *Banksia Marginata,* Silver Banksia; *Cassinia aculeata*, Dollybush; *Epacris impressa*, Common Heath; *Hakea* sp., Needlebush; *Juncus pallidus*, Rush; *Lepto-*

spermum laevi-gatum, Coast Teatree; *Lomandra longifolia*, Sagg; *Melaleuca ericifolia*, Coast Paperbark; *Myoporum insulare*, Common boobialla; *Olearia* sp., Daisybush; *Ozothamnus rosmarinifolius*, Swamp Everlastingbush; *Platylobium triangulare*, Arrow flatpea; *Ricinocarpos pinifolius*, Wedding Bush; *Xanthorrhoea* sp, Grasstree

Plants at Weymouth at lunch stop

Acacia mearnsii, Black Wattle; *Acacia melanoxylon*, Blackwood; *Bursaria spinosa*, Prickly Box; *Leucopogon parviflorus*, Coast beardheath ; *Rhagodia candolleana*, Coastal Saltbush

SKEMPS DAY - Sunday 24 February - Insect collecting

Today fifteen members and four visitors which included 3 children, arrived at Skemps to collect insects which will be identified and the images added to the photographic collection started last year.

The morning was overcast with intermittent fine rain falling although it was muggy. In our waterproofs we headed off in different directions with containers removing bark, turning rocks and fallen logs collecting anything that moved. The children were very excited and keen during the search, sharing what they had found and helping others to catch specimens that we not wanting to be caught. By lunchtime we had filled all the containers available, so headed back to have lunch before sorting through our finds.

During the afternoon the rain increased and a heavy fog settled around the Centre.

The insects were placed in the refrigerator to chill and sedate them to allow Judith time to measure and scan each insect under the digital microscope and for Karen to take photographs to assist with their identification, prior to them being released. We left rather late wanting to record the many specimens prior to departure.

The day's collecting was more successful than expected considering the weather. We caught a variety of spiders, jack jumpers and bull ants, scorpions, a variety of flies and moths, cockroach, centipedes, slater, dung and other beetles, worms, slugs and snails, and a leech (or did the leech catch one of us). The images are currently being examined and findings will be presented when finalised.

GENERAL MEETING - Tuesday 5 March - Member's Night

We had two very interesting presentations by members this evening.

The first was by Paul Edwards who spoke about the his great uncle Jack Walsh who undertook research in 1772 on electric fish in Brittany, comparing the voltaic pile b etween saltwater and freshwater electric fish which contributed to the knowledge of electricity and the invention of the battery. The Royal Society awarded him their Copley Medal in 1773 for a paper on the electrical properties of torpedo fish.

Hans Bosman then showed members a powerpoint presentation of the research he had undertaken on the digital microscope that he had received as a Christmas gift. He tested the microscope over a range of settings to find out about its capabilities and limitations, achieving a better knowledge of how to use the device to get the best results. He had made his own stand to hold the microscope and auxiliary lights and

showed how an old opaque film roll canister can be adapted to stop outside light interfering when capturing an image.

Members showed their appreciation to both Paul and Hans.

Noel Manning informed members that Jeff Campbell had sold his house and is making a permanent move to Queensland. He then read out a farewell which included a short history of Jeff's contributions to the Club since he joined in 1984. Jeff was President for two terms (four years), Treasurer for three years, Newsletter Editor for seven years and was also actively involvement with the building of Skemps and as a longtime member of the Tuesday group who maintained Skemps, and he always supported and joined in all Club activities. Jeff will be missed and we wish him well knowing that we will meet again at a field naturalist gathering in the future.

Jeff gave a reply and spoke of his days collecting orchids in Tasmania and stated that at one stage he was sending three or four new specimens to Canberra each week.

FIELD TRIP - Friday 15 to Sunday 17 March - West Coast

On Friday 15 March, fourteen members departed Launceston to our destination Tullah for a weekend of panning, walks, botanising and social interaction.

We met at Tullah Lakeside Lodge where most members stayed and after an early lunch departed to tour the Anthony Road in light rain with Peter Ralph leading. We stopped in four roadside locations; the first two had steep banks which were lush with mosses, ferns, pandani, creeping myrtle and richea. The patchy rain progressively got heavier but as we could see it coming, we were able to get back to our cars before it arrived and therefore remained relatively dry. The last two stops were at geological sites, a large boulder deposited during glacial melting and at Lake Selina we saw a large area containing conglomerate rock. With the rain settling in we headed back to Tullah to have tea at the Lodge and afterwards a small group had a closer look at some plant specimens and identified them.

On Saturday morning we met at the Lodge carpark early to travel to Merton Creek Reserve with Richard Wolfe a Tullah resident and friend of Peter Warren and Peter Ralph. Richard was taking us to the site to try our luck panning for osmiridium and gold. Luckily the rain had stopped when we arrived, but we still donned our wet weather gear prior to making our way to a creek site surrounded by thick forest. We were all shown the technique to reduce the pan contents to the finer sediment which might contain the goods, and then found a site to pan. Unfortunately all that was found was spinel and one tiny speck of osmiridium. When the dark clouds returned we headed back to the cars knowing the rain wasn't far off. After thanking Richard we drove in heavy rain to Tullah for lunch.

Following lunch we drove to the Montezuma Falls, a short distance past Rosebery. There were many cars in the carpark so the earlier rain hadn't put people off the approximately 11 kilometre walk. Setting off we were amazed at the variety of plants along the old tram track which included leatherwood, myrtle, sassafras and giant tree ferns. There were many interpretive signs along the track which gave us an insight into the history of the area. The falls which are reported as the highest in Tasmania were an impressive sight; the rain had ensured a good flow of water cascading down the rocky face of the fall. Many photos were taken from the platform at base of the falls and also

from the suspension bridge which spanned the creek below the falls. With the afternoon getting on, we started the return walk arriving back at the carpark around 5 pm and with everyone accounted for, returned to Tullah. Following tea we again got together to look at a few plant specimens to identify them before retiring for the night.

On Sunday morning we drove to Zeehan to Richard Wolfe's mineral shop where members purchased Tasmanian gemstones and minerals as souvenirs of the trip. Along the home journey some members chose to stop at the heathlands just before the Cradle Mountain turn off, to look at the richea and paper daisy along the roadside before the final leg of the trip home, following a very pleasant weekend on the west coast.

Anthony Road

Acacia dealbata ssp dealbata, silver wattle; *Acacia melanoxylon*, blackwood; *Acacia mucronata* sp., caterpillar wattle; *Acacia verticillata* sp., prickly moses; *Acaena novae-zelandiae*, common buzzy; *Agastachys odorata*, fragrant candlebush; *Anodopetalum biglandulosum*, horizontal; *Anopterus glandulosus*, Tasmanian laurel; *Baeckea leptocaulis*, slender heathmyrtle; *Baloskion tetraphyllum* ssp *tetraphyllum*, tassel cordrush; *Banksia marginata*, silver banksia; *Bauera rubioides*, wiry bauera; *Billardiera longi-folia*, purple appleberry; *Blechnum nudum*, fishbone waterfern; *Blechnum penna-marina*, alpine waterfern; *Blechnum wattsii*, hard waterfern; *Calochilus* sp., beard-orchid; *Cassinia aculeata*, dollybush; *Cenarrhenes nitida*, native plum; *Cladia retipora*, coral lichen; *Coprosma hirtella*, coffeeberry; *Coprosma nitida*, mountain currant; *Dicksonia antarctica*, soft treefern; *Diplarrena latifolia*, western flag-iris; *Drosera binata*, forked sundew; *Eriochilus cucullatus*, parson's bands; *Eucalypt* sp, gum; *Eucryphia* sp., small leaf leatherwood; *Gahnia grandis*, cutting grass; *Gaultheria hispida*, copperleaf snow-berry; *Gymnoschoenus sphaerocephalus*, button grass; *Hypolepis rugosula*, ruddy ground-fern; *Juncus articulatus*, jointed rush; *Leptocophylla* sp., pinkberry; *Leptospermum nitidum*, shiny teatree; *Leptospermum scoparium* sp., common teatree; *Leucopogon collinus*, white beardheath; *Leucopogon virgatus* var *virgatus*, twiggy beardheath; *Lycopodium fastigiatum*, mountain clubmoss; *Nothofagus cunninghamii*, myrtle beech; *Oxylobium ellipticum*, golden shaggypea; *Persoonia gunnii* var *gunnii*, mountain geebung; *Philotheca virgata*, twiggy waxflower; *Polystitchum proliferum*, mother shieldfern; *Pomaderris* sp., dogwood; *Prionotes cerinthoides*, climbing heath; *Pultenaea juniperina*, prickly beauty; *Richea pandanifolia* ssp *pandanifolia*, pandani; *Richea sprengelioides*, rigid candleheath; *Sphagnum sp.*, moss; *Sprengelia incarnata*, pink swampheath; *Stererocaulon ramulosum*, lichen; *Telopea truncata*, Tasmanian waratah red

Merton Creek Reserve

Bauera rubioidies, wiry bauera; *Cassinia aculeata*, dollybush; *Drymophila cyano-carpa*, native solomon's seal; *Gahnia grandis*, cutting grass; *Hakea epiglottis*, beaked needlebush; *Leptecophylla juniperina* subsp *parviflora*, mountain pinkberry; *Leptospermum lanigerum*, woolly teatree; *Lepidosperma* sp., swordsedge; *Notelea ligustrina*, native olive; *Notho-fagus cunninghamii*, myrtle beech; *Persoonia gunnii*, mountain geebung ; *Spyridium gunnii*, forest dustymiller; *Stererocaulon ramulosum*, lichen; *Westringia rubiaefolia*, sticky westringia

Montezuma Falls list

Anodopetalum biglandulosum, horizontal; *Anopterus glandulosus*, Tasmanian laurel;

Aristotelia peduncularis, heartberry; *Atherosperma moschatum,* sassafras; *Blechnum wattsii*, hard waterfern; *Cassinia aculeata,* dollybush; *Coprosma quadrifida,* native currant; *Crepidomanes venosum,* bristle filmyfern; *Cyathea* sp., rough treefern; *Dianella tasmanica,* forest flaxlily; *Dicksonia antarctica,* soft treefern; *Eucryphia lucida,* leatherwood; *Grammitis billardierei,* finger fern; *Histiopteris incisa,* batswing fern; *Hypopterygium* sp.*,* umbrella moss; *Leptospermum lanigerum,* woolly teatree; *Libertia pulchella* var *pulchella,* pretty grassflag; *Lycopodium* sp., clubmoss; *Microsorum pustulatum* ssp *pustulatum,* kangaroo fern; *Nematolepis squamea* ssp *squamea,* satinwood; *Olearia argophylla,* musk Daisybush; *Olearia persoonioides,* geebung daisybush; *Parsonsia brownii*, twining silkpod; *Phyllocladus aspleniifolius*, celerytop pine; *Pimelea drupacea*, cherry riceflower; *Polystitchum proliferum*, mother shieldfern; *Pomaderris apetala*, common dogwood; *Prionotes cerinthoides*, climbing heath; *Prostanthera lasianthos* var *lasianthos*, christmas mintbush; *Stereocaulon ramulosum*, lichen; *Sticherus tener*, silky fanfern

SKEMPS DAY- Saturday 23 - Time Team Dig in old Homestead Site

Eleven members arrived at Skemps to participate in a dig around the old homestead site. The weather forecast for the day was ‘few showers clearing’, but during the morning the intervals between showers seemed to be getting shorter and the rain heavier.

The fire in the Centre had been lit so members waited it out having a coffee and chat, meanwhile Rhys in wet weather gear headed out to take further GPS readings along a few of the tracks, which he is entering into a surveying program which will indicate on a map where all these walks are in relation to the property boundaries and also plotted locations of interpretation sites on the property. He travelled along the Tyre Track, Fern Gully to Bottom Falls, Bottom Falls to the paddock junction where it meets with the East Walk through to the creek and returned to the Centre. After removing all his wet gear, he then removed thirteen leeches from his legs and body. He spent time during the afternoon uploading the information into the program.

The prospects still not looking good about 11.30, the BBQ was lit and we all had an early lunch. The sun shone not long after finishing lunch so we quickly headed to the homestead site where Peter R and Tony had already started to remove the grass from a marked dig site. Peter then ran the metal detector over the area which indicated a few spots to dig, where Christine and Tony found small pieces of metal and old batteries. Just outside that area Claire found part of a boot sole and the boots leather upper with eyelets. John and Prue worked in another marked dig site where Prue found what appeared to be a footpath up to the house. The skies darkened again and Peter, John and Claire took refuge in the Interpretation Booth, whilst Prue, Tony, Christine and I stood under a large tree. With the tree not providing much shelter and the rain continuing, Tony, Christine, Claire and I returned to the Centre as we were quite wet.

Once the rain stopped, unbeknown to us Peter, John and Prue had located all the house corners and in conjunction with the remaining ruins pegged out the site to re-create the house plan. Heading home about 4.30 pm, we had gone to say our farewells to them and were given an interpretative tour of the house as it was prior to its destruction. It was a great way to finish the day.

SOCIAL EVENING - Monday 25 March

14 members met for a pleasant social evening at Steve's Grill in Riverside. The food was excellent and the pleasant company enticed us to stay long after finishing our meals.

CLUB CALENDAR 2014

Members are invited to submit images that meet the Conditions of Entry detailed below for the Club's 2014 calendar. John Elliott will be compiling the images and accompanying sentence regarding the image content. Due to time constraints these must be submitted by end of the May. The final decision will be made by the Committee to ensure a balanced and representative calendar.

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 are not acceptable.
- All images submitted must be identified and a sentence is required about the content, for example:- *The Copperleaf Snowberry is endemic to Tasmania and is found in mountain rainforest and wet eucalypt forests, from sea level to montane forest.*
- The above requirement does apply to landscapes. A sentence or two on the aspect of natural history that the landscape illustrates is required. A couple of examples might be:
  The organ pipes on Mt Wellington are composed of dolerite. Dolerite is an igneous rock that has intruded into overlying (usually sedimentary) rocks, or *Fagus (Nothofagus gunnii) occurs only in Tasmania. It is the only winter-deciduous species in Australia*.
- Photos should be at least 2 megapixels in size so that good quality pictures can be printed. Photos with a 3:2 aspect ratio are preferred eg a 15cm x 10cm post-card print. Most of the photos used on the calendar have to be 15cm wide and 10cm high rather than 10cm x 15cm.

Images to be submitted on CD or USB, or by Email (as below) with accompanying Word document containing the written information required in the previous **Condition of Entry**.

Each email should contain no more than 2 photos as these should be submitted as high quality (large) files as required for printing. Each email to be labelled as LFN calendar entry and include your name. Written information sent by email can be either a Word attachment or clearly marked in the email text.

Send emails to john_elliott_10@hotmail.com before 31 May.

AUSTRALIAN PLANT SOCIETY MEETINGS

LFNC members are welcome to attend APS meetings held on a Tuesday at Max Fry Hall, Gorge Road Trevallyn at 7.30 pm. Dates for the next two meetings are:

April 16 - Guest speaker Frank Rosol an arborist
May 21 - Club Night
The APS will hold their autumn Native Plant Sale at Max Fry hall on Saturday 20 April between 10am and 4pm. The plants, propagated by members and grown at the APS nursery, are available at very reasonable prices. The full APS program can be viewed at http://apstasnorth.org/pages/program.html

QVMAG EXHIBITIONS

Into the Wild - Wilderness photography in Tasmania

Highlighting the artistic talent of key Tasmanian wilderness photographers and the impact that this type of photography has had on Tasmania, the exhibition charts the development of wilderness photography from its earliest days to the present.

Featured photographers include Allport, Spurling, Beattie, Smithies, King, Perrin, Thwaites, Truchanas, Dombrovskis, England, Blakers, Bell, Stephenson, and Walch. Tasmania has been at the forefront of wilderness appreciation from the early preservation efforts, the conservation movement and tourism promotion. It was these photographers who championed efforts to recognise and preserve Tasmanian wilderness by creating evocative images that encouraged so many to appreciate and visit these landscapes.

When: 15 March 2013 to 16 February 2014
Where: Gallery 3, QVMAG, Royal Park
Admission: Free

Source: http://www.qvmag.tas.gov.au/qvmag/index.php?c=155

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