



## THE LAUNCESTON NATURALIST

Volume L No. 5 June / July 2017

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

Patron : Prof Nigel Forteach  
President : Mrs J Handler, 52 Entally Rd Hadspen, 6393 6603  
Hon. Secretary : Mrs P Wright  
Hon. Treasurer : Mrs K Manning, 46 Robin St Newstead, 6344 2277

Meetings 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of month, Feb-Dec at Scotch Oakburn College,  
Penquite Rd Newstead, commencing at 7.30 pm

### Program:

#### August ~

Tuesday 1 - General Meeting guest speaker James Day, *Wedge-tailed eagle monitoring*

Sat 19 / Sun 20 - Field Trip - Mt Pleasant Radio Telescope Observatory and Chauncy Vale Wildlife Sanctuary

Sunday 27 - Skemps Day - Tree maintenance on Skemp Creek

#### September ~

Tuesday 5 - General Meeting guest speaker Tanya Bailey, *Trees and climate change*

Sunday 10 - Field Trip - Tom Gibson Reserve

Saturday 23 - Skemp Day

#### October ~

Tuesday 3 - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Plough Inn, Brisbane Street, Launceston, 6 for 6.30pm start

TBC - Field Trip - Weekend at Maria Island

Sunday 22 or 29 - Skemps Day - Macroinvertebrate monitoring & tree decline monitoring

For further program details visit <http://www.lfnc.org.au/meetings.htm>

## Skemp Report June/July 2017

With a few Tuesdays off and the wet weather our only significant tasks have been to fine tune the new door for the breeze way at the back entrance and bring more wood in for the visitors to use in the fire place. The Centre is being rented more lately than during the first half of the year and there has been a welcome injection of funds into the account.

I recently attended a workshop on using fire to reduce the risk of fire on properties, mainly those covered by a covenant, and as well as learning some interesting things I came away with four small projects to make Skemps more fire safe. The biggest job is to widen the drive way and reduce the fuel load along it and the other tasks involve reducing the fuel load in three key areas near the building. You can find the full details in my write up in the newsletter.

During a break in the workshop I asked if Skemps could be assessed by the TFS for fire risks and possible burn options only to be told that it was a busy time of the year and a small property was a low priority. However, on Tuesday I received a call from Chris of the TFS confirming that the majority of the covenanted part of Skemps is wet forest and unsuitable for fuel reduction burns. Chris also told me that he had visited the property with a church group and had a map of the property. He agreed that the work points for the property put together with David agreed with his ideas for managing the fire risk at Skemps.

A surprisingly productive work shop.

Noel Manning

### Puggle

**June** ~ The Puggle was presented by John Elliott. He asked what adaptation honeyeaters have to their mouthparts to enable them to remove nectar from flowers. Feathered tongues was the correct answer, given by Noel who remembered learning this at Professor Nigel Forteach's talk.

**July** ~ The Puggle was presented by Noel Manning. His question was, "*when did the last Thylacine in captivity in Tasmania die and what was the name of the zoo?*" The last animal died in captivity on 7 September 1936 in Beaumaris Zoo (aka Hobart Zoo). No-one correctly stated the year of death, but Karen correctly advised the animal died in the Beaumaris Zoo.

### Sightings

**June** ~ Tina had an interesting sighting to relate. Juvenile cormorants are still in their nests at the Queechy Ponds, (interesting enough in itself) but this morning two Sea Eagles were about, one sitting on a tree branch and eating a young cormorant. Danny reported seeing a white bird of prey (a Grey Goshawk) at Patersonia.

**July** ~ Noel reported a sea eagle in the paddock below Skemps. Tom T saw eastern rosellas or crossbred parrots at Franklin House.

**Library Report** ~ Tina advised that "*A Handbook of the Birds of Tasmania and its Dependencies (1910)*" by Frank Mervyn Little had been purchased for the Club library. The book is a facsimile reprint of the original publication of 1910. Newsletters had also been received from Central North and Burnie Field Naturalists clubs and there were newspapers clippings with articles of interest.

**New Members** ~ At the June general meeting we welcomed Anna Karsazky and Chris Taplin to the Club. We look forward to them participating in future activities.

**The Year That Was** ~ Please send images from club activities for inclusion in this presentation should be submitted to Peter Ralph via email or USB storage device, as soon as possible after the event.

***A Guide to Flowers & Plants of Tasmania*** ~ Club Treasurer, Karen has copies of the Club's guide available at \$22 each. If you would like to purchase a copy contact Karen on 6344 2277.

***Australian Naturalists Network (ANN)*** ~ the 10<sup>th</sup> get-together of the ANN is being organised by the South East Australian Naturalists' Association Inc. It will begin at Halls Gap in the Grampians on Saturday 29 September 2018 and conclude on Monday 8 October 2018 at Anglesea on the Surf Coast near Geelong. This is the middle of the spring season in southern Victoria when many local communities hold native flower shows.

More information can be found at: <https://australiannaturalistsnetwork.wordpress.com/> . If you do not have access to the internet, please advise Karen Manning who will arrange some information for you.

Expression of interests were required **by 31 July 2017**. If you are wanting to attend please contact the organisers promptly.

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Notice is hereby given that the 2017 Annual General Meeting of members of the Launceston Field Naturalists Club will be held at the Plough Inn in Brisbane Street Launceston, on Tuesday 3 October, arrive at 6.00pm for a 6.30pm start.

### **Business**

- Welcome from President, Judith Handler
- Apologies
- Confirmation of the minutes of the last AGM
- President, Judith Handler's outgoing report
- Receive and accept the Financial Report from the Treasurer
- Appoint an Auditor for the term until the conclusion of the AGM in 2018 and to confirm their remuneration
- Election of Office Bearers namely: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and 6 Committee members
- Expressions of interest to other positions: club newsletter (writing reports & articles), programming for speakers and field trips, public officer, promotions officer to name a few.

The AGM will be followed by a short General Meeting for information on upcoming field trips and other business.

All members are invited to attend this AGM and dinner, cost of meal and drinks will be at own expense. RSVP is essential, please contact Karen on 6344 2277 or by emailing her at [waldonkaren@gmail.com](mailto:waldonkaren@gmail.com) by Friday 29 September if you are attending or offering an apology.

Nominations for Office Bearers should be submitted to the Secretary no later than 10 days prior to the AGM using forms accompanying this newsletter. Members should consider nominating for a position.

Our president and secretary will not be standing for renomination. Other office bearers who have given their time for some years would prefer to step down and allow other members with new ideas to take part in the running of this group.

Electronic newsletter recipients can [download](#) the nomination form from the Club's website.

## GENERAL MEETING JUNE ~ GUEST SPEAKER JOHN HARRIS ~ WOMBATS

Judith introduced John Harris who was to talk on the efforts to save the wombats from the debilitating sarcoptic mange, the microscopic mite *Sarcoptes scabiei*, which is scabies in humans.

John started by telling us that he was ignorant of wildlife decline in Tasmania until quite recently when, as a fly in fly out worker to Melbourne, he sat next to Judith King. Judith is a Tasmanian who is passionate about wildlife and she told him about these issues and contacted him later asking him what he was going to do about the wombats in the Kelso area where he lived.

A meeting was called in Kelso and 65 people turned up, Wombat Rescue was formed and as a result John became the face and voice of the efforts to save the wombats from mange. John told us that the mange had been seen in wombats over 30 years ago and that many people considered it to be a natural culling of an over population event while he knew that there was no coming back, sick animals die and that there is no back up population.

We also learnt that a team investigating the Musselroe wind farm area had found 200 mange affected wombats and that there were some 600 burrows in Narawntapu with no wombats. Yet culling permits are still being issued to farmers to protect their pastures and stock from healthy wombats. John said that he had not heard of a cow or horse being injured stepping into a wombat hole and this is one reason for the cull permits being issued.

At this stage the questions started and while answering John let the slide show continue. We learnt more about the wombat followed by detailed information on finding burrows, identifying animals using them, deciding whether a sick wombat was worth saving or should be euthanized and finally how to apply the treatment.

We also learnt that a permit is needed to enter crown land and to treat the animals in a direct way, such as the pole and scoop administration of the Cydectin, while no permit is needed to put treatment flaps on the burrows or tracks.

Wombats have a low reproduction rate with the female breeding after three years and producing one joey every one to three years. Also that it takes two years to raise a young wombat and that each female will have only three or four joeys in a 10 to 15 year life span.

Their closest relative is the koala and our Tasmanian wombat is smaller than those on the mainland. Wombats dislike high temperatures and cope well in the cold which explains why we see them, or their scats, in the highland areas of Tasmania. They have poor eyesight and the lowest metabolic rate and known food intake of all Australian marsupials. Wombats 'time share' 4-5 burrows over a five hectare range in good conditions or up to 23 hectares in poor conditions.

A single wombat can produce 80 to 100 of their distinctive scats in a night so the number of scats in no indication of the wombat population of an area.

After a picture of a healthy wombat we saw a slide with two seriously affected wombats, which John did not dwell on, learning that there is crusting around the face, ears, flanks and shoulders and this can result in blindness and deafness. A further slide showed four wombats with non-mange wounds mainly on the rump, middle of the back and neck.

We then saw slides showing various stages of the mange starting with the early, very treatable, stage one. You will see early signs of hair loss scabs on the flank and the animal will not usually be seen in the daytime, although Tasmanian animals will graze on dull days with low temperatures.

Stage two is also treatable if there are no infected wounds present. For this stage there is increased fur loss, with crusty scabs around the eyes and ears and the animal may or may not be alert and may appear to be blind and deaf and easily approached. Animals will feed during the day for stage two and three.

By stage three it is advisable to seek advice about whether the animal can be saved or needs to be euthanized. These animals will have thick plaques, little fur, infected fly blown wounds and a rotting dead smell indicating the infestation has progressed too far and secondary infection has developed.

The slides then gave us information on how to begin the treatment, including finding the burrows of affected wombats. Wombats suffering from severe mange may be seen grazing during the day and

should be approached slowly downwind to be followed to its burrow and working from a distance with binoculars is even better as this will not stress them.

To find burrows check at the base of fallen trees or look for a mound, disturbed soil or fresh scats near an entrance and mark the area with pink tape. Blocking a burrow entrance with bracken will identify active burrows as the bracken will be pushed aside if an animal is using it and as some burrows are too wide it may be necessary to partially block them with limbs to force the animal to go under the flap.

If burrows cannot be identified or you cannot gain access to wombat used land, flaps can be set up on well-worn tracks, especially on fences. These flaps consist of a large ice cream container lid with an orange juice (OJ) lid glued in the middle. The OJ lid holds the Cydectin which is tipped onto the animal when it goes under the flap which needs to be monitored weekly in the early days then fortnightly to replace the medication and to check that the burrow is being used.

We were shown the burrow flap method where the flap is attached to a wire frame, an upside down U, with the points pushed into the ground at the entrance. This can be done during the day so as not to disturb the wombat which does not know it is being treated and is not stressed by human activity.

Slides showed animals being treated as they entered burrows or went through fences and we were introduced to Wilbur and Hughie. These wombats had the mange and pictures showed them as they returned to good health after treatment.

The internet sites [www.wombatprotection.org.au](http://www.wombatprotection.org.au) (NSW) and [www.mangemanagement.org.au](http://www.mangemanagement.org.au) (Vic) were given to find more information. Peter Ralph thanked him and asked members to show their appreciation.

Noel Manning

## **FIELD TRIP ~ WOMBATS AT KELSO ~ SATURDAY 17 JUNE**

Eight members met John Harris, of Wombat Rescue Tasmania, at the Kelso Community Hall on a cool sunny morning and after a short chat entered the building for morning tea.

In attendance were Beatrice (Bea) and Brendan, also from the rescue group which was formed only 14 months before, as well as Andrea Dawkins MP, the Green's member for Bass.

During a lengthy morning tea, kindly supplied by the rescue group, we garnered further information about the animals, the rescue group and their methods before driving the 500 metres to Brendan's home to see what he was doing for wombats. Here we also met another volunteer Steve and the rescued juvenile wombats including TC who was on page 17 of today's Mercury newspaper. Junior member Taylor Campbell (TC) held and posed for photos with TC the wombat.

From here we walked along the street to find more wombats and to my surprise we did. Along the way we saw many mange gates, a flap set up to douse the animal in Cydectin to kill the mite which causes the disease.

Walking with Steve ahead of the group we rounded the corner and saw a wombat crossing the road. Further along we saw one to the left enjoying the lush grasses intended for the sheep and horses in these paddocks. As we walked up the road we counted maybe 12 in total and on the return walk another crossed the road.

Rounding the corner to Brendan's home another walked toward us before hurrying off into the ditch beside the road. This was where Brendan claimed one lived and the animal seemed at home there and showed only a little effect from the mange.

In total we saw some 20 wombats and we noted that this was more than we had seen for some time and that many of us had only recently realised that this was a serious disease which threatened the very existence of this iconic Australian native animal.

A short walk from Brendan's home took us to Bea's house and more importantly her garage where she manufactured the equipment used to cure the mange. We were given a comprehensive introduction to the manufacturing of the gates which douse the animals in the Cydectin.

Most of us went to York Town for lunch before a walk through the York Town historic site and a visit to a property over the road looking for fungi. I also looked in the dogwood leaf litter for the elusive *Thismia* with the usual lack of success.

Noel Manning



**Wombat that has recovered from mange**



**Members being told how wombat burrow flaps are made**

#### **SKEMPS DAY ~ SOCIAL DAY ~ SUNDAY 25 JUNE**

10 members arrived at Skemps during the morning and as with previous Skemp Days this year the day was cold and there was a fine drizzle of rain, which as the morning progressed became heavy showers. The planned activity, maintenance of trees along Skemp Creek, was again put off for better weather and today became an odd job and social day.

Tina had some library duties to do and Prue busied herself with some computer work. Judith and Mike both helped with some computer issues and other jobs were done in the Centre. John and Noel made a few adjustments to the newly installed flyscreen door near the gas BBQ before lunch. The door had been on the agenda for some time and will be great during the warmer weather.

Some members did brave the cold and took short walks between the showers later in the day. Karen noted many fresh *Engaeus* mounds on the Loop Track, but didn't find any fungi in the usual spots and removed some foxglove. Noel walked the Zigzag Track where he saw 6 of the elongated club fungus, *Cordyceps gunnii*, which are usually seen each year in that area and John walked the Ferngully Track looking for fungi to photograph.

KW

#### **GENERAL MEETING JULY ~ MEMBERS NIGHT ~ TUESDAY 4 JULY**

As this month's General Meeting we had five club members provide presentations. Prue started the evening by explaining the details of a study that she was involved in at the Hatfield Plains ready for a Foreco burn to control weeds, including the invasive native *Hakea microcarpa*. This involved workers laying on the ground examining an area in minute detail while Prue ticked off the species identified from a list of plants that had been found during a previous study. The slide show included an explanation of the area, the need for the study and the burn and we were treated to great pictures of the vegetation to be found there. This included the small plants *Ajuga australis*, *Velleia montana*, *Trachymene humilis*, *Veronica gracilis*, *Ranunculus pascuinus*, *Comesperma retusum*, *Podolepis jaceoides* and *Coronidium scorpioides* as well as images of two crane flies and of the ferns, mosses and liverworts seen and finally, a picture of the crowded leek orchid. This was *Prasophyllum crebriflorum*, the plant club members had travelled to the area to find and monitor for Phil Collier in January this year.

Next Karen explained WomSAT, with a slide show of the internet site, dedicated to recording wombat sightings Australia wide, to assist with the rescue of this animal which is in severe decline as a result of the wombat mange. This was another Citizen Science project and we were introduced to it as a result of our search for a speaker on wombats and the mange.

John then introduced an 11.5 minute slide show on the plants he had photographed during the 2016 ANN, set the slide show going and settled back while we enjoyed the photographic journey of Western Australian wild flowers. We saw 52 plant photographs in total from the Alison Baird Reserve, Ellis Brook Valley, Hartfield Park, John Forrest National Park, Lightning Swamp, Mundaring Weir, Star Swamp, Wireless Hill and Wongamine Nature Reserve, all to John's high standard.

Judith then gave an explanation of the covenant, which protects the natural values of the Skemps property, and told us of the habitats to be protected. Her slide show included images of the various plants mentioned in the covenant with a map of the Australians/New Zealand distribution and another of the Tasmanian distribution. She gave a list of the restrictions on our activities in the covenanted areas and noted that the rare species included the Skemps snail and the burrowing crayfish, *Engaeus orramakunna*.

Peter (W) finished the member presentations with a slide show of the orchids he had photographed over many visits to the Carr Villa Reserve, showing the excellent variety and abundance of orchids in this reserve.

Noel Manning

## **OUTING ~ QVMAG INVERESK NATURAL HISTORY COLLECTION ~ TUESDAY 11 JULY**

Members met today at the Inveresk site of the QVMAG for a look at the natural history collection. David, the natural history curator of the museum, came out to inform us that we would be looking at the collection over at the Royal Park site, so we car pooled our way there to be joined by others for a total of 17 enthusiastic members.

Museum staff David, Simon and Tammy met us at the door and after a brief explanation of safety procedures we moved to the basement area where the main collection is stored. Staff member Judy joined us later.

In a room with many exhibits displayed as they would be seen in the wild, David explained that these were display items and of little scientific interest and not suitable for study. A study item should have the by whom, the where and when it was collected and if possible details of the environment in which it was collected, as well as the skeleton to assist with future study. This was still an impressive area with animals from land, sea and sky, native and exotic and some now extinct, sitting on shelves for our inspection.

The tour then moved to a collections room with draws containing many specimens of each bird or animal. From the sea birds we moved to the herbarium where our late member Mary Cameron had worked to identify and catalogue the exhibits and as orchids were a favourite of hers there were many in this collection.

In the cramped conditions of the collections area we often could not all be with the speaker so other staff in attendance contributed to our visit.

We looked at other collections including minerals where we noted the weight of the Queensland meteorite, much heavier than the size would suggest, and in one room there were three thylacine to be studied.

While many exhibits were in dedicated steel cabinets, with a small number of draws behind a removable front panel, we also noted the beautiful old wooden cabinets from a bygone era still in use for the collection.

In Simon's cramped work space we looked at his favourite study item beetles and other insect specimens out on show. He told us that he had recently sent 10 cockroaches to an expert on the mainland and expected to find that these were all new species.

Our official tour ended in the bunker outside the museum where specimens are kept in a solution of ethanol, intact, with the internal organs still in place, ready for future research.

Judith thanked the staff as we were grateful for the time they had devoted to us going through these wonderful collections. We then returned to the Inveresk campus of the Museum for a relaxing lunch in the old train carriage.

Noel Manning



**Members cramming into Simon's office to look at insect specimens**



**Some of the interesting pieces in the collection**

#### **TAMAR NRM BURNING TO PLAN WORKSHOP ~ FRIDAY 21 & SATURDAY 22 JULY**

Around 30 people attended this workshop aimed at giving us the knowledge needed to use controlled burns to protect our rural properties from future fires. Most attendees were there for properties covered by covenants while some were enthusiastic nature lovers with rural retreats. Gill Basnett, from Tamar NRM, did the introduction and to our amusement gave us evacuation procedures for the Tasmanian Fire Service (TFS) building where we were doing the workshop.

Anna Povey worked hard to keep the workshop going while other staff looked at technical problems which prevented the computer from connecting to the big screen. At this stage we were handed an A1 size map of our property, from The List, with a plastic overlay and coloured felt pens to mark significant details while we evaluated the property for risks and areas to be protected.

We also learnt that Anna is the contact person who will assess a request for a burn on properties with a covenant and make the contact with DPIPWE to get the necessary permission for the burn.

David from TFS took over the presentation and gave us the technical side of fire management, what to expect during a wild fire and how to conduct a controlled burn. This included the Asset Protection Zones (APZs), particularly for buildings, where the fuel load is reduced to stop a fire from reaching the asset and to provide a safe work area for fire fighters and homeowners to fight the fire.

Other information was provided by Stephen, an environmental officer, who is with the TFS in the Fuel Reduction Unit, a group who look at the big picture and not likely to assess small holdings and provide information to the individual land owners.

The technical difficulties meant we finished late although there were few complaints as we realised the importance of the workshop and the information we picked up.

During a chat with David I was surprised to learn that the TFS would not abandon Skemps due to our tricky access road as we had often surmised. There were plenty of open spaces to get vehicles away from a fire and even if the driveway area was burnt he said that the fire would only last about half an hour in the road area and not trap them. He also described how forest fires are changing as the climate warms and dries. Large fallen logs are drier and tend to burn and remain alight after the fire front has passed by and that this creates a much deeper fire front and makes fighting it more difficult. Also, you can no longer control a fire in the short term, even leaving it in the evening, as these large logs keep it going and make it likely to flare up overnight.

Day two saw only 13 people return to work on a plan for their properties and I struggled with ideas until David joined me and soon had me thinking about four zones to work on to secure Skemps against future fires.

Zone one was the driveway which he said should be widened to improve access, especially to allow TFS vehicles to pass each other, and the fuel load should be reduced so that it is more likely to remain open during a fire.

Zone two was to improve and extend the buffer zone behind the field centre, although it may already be big enough as the map he was looking at did not show how open it was under the trees in that area.

Zone three was the area between the drive and the open paddock from the building end to about half way to the bend in the drive. When I thought about this I realised that when we rake the drive the leaves and twigs are moved into the depression on that side of the drive leaving a large pile of relatively dry fuel surrounded by shrubs and low trees. He suggested removing the fuel with small burns although I think this would not work because of the low trees and it is in the covenanted area. It would be better to move the fuel to the paddock for the burns.

Zone four is the Water Gate trail all the way from the Centre to the start of the Federation Corridor. This area has a lot of undergrowth and dead silver wattles, which burn well even when alive, and the area is not covered by the covenant so we can work there without permission from DPIPW. He also suggested that all dead trees be removed from the Centre area. You need to register all these burns with the TFS so that staff do not unnecessarily attend your fire.

An impressive workshop providing worthwhile information on managing Skemps for fire protection. As well Stephen is willing to consider a talk to the Club members as a guest speaker at a general meeting or, more appropriately, as a talk during a Skemps Day with a walk around the property to demonstrate what he has spoken about. I will keep in touch. Noel Manning

## **SKEMPS DAY ~ TREE PLANTING AND MAINTENANCE ~ SATURDAY 22 JULY**

Six members arrived to a cold and overcast day at Skemps to provide maintenance to trees along Skemp Creek. While guards provide protection for small trees from hungry wild life as they get established, the trees can be restricted once the guard is out grown and with some trees the branches tangle into the wire making future removal difficult.

Most of the tree guards were removed permanently, while plants still showing signs of predation were given larger guards to allow them to establish further and grow strong and too tall for the animals.

With only two members bring food needing cooking it was decided not to light the BBQ and to use the gas cooker in the kitchen instead. This allowed them to stay inside out of the cold and they



**Removing plants from tree guards**



**Collecting removed items for storage**

could continue in the ongoing conversations. Light sprinkles of rain occurred during our meals, but this didn't deter us going back out and spending another hour and a half tending more plants, after which we collected up all the removed guards, sticks and plastic bags, which John and Tom (M) moved to the fire shed where they will be stored for future use.

We were all very happy with what we achieved today and plan to continue the maintenance next month during the Skemps Day. KW

## 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. The next meetings will be:

**August 15** - Member presentations, Roy Pallett '*Rabbits, Fungi and Lichens*' & others talks to be announced

**September 19** - Tim Rudman from DPIPWE will speak about Myrtle Rust

**Native Plant Sale:-** The APS will hold their spring native plant sale at the Max Fry Hall on Saturday 7 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.

## ARE DUCKS EATING PLASTIC IN AUSTRALIA?

Angela Hansen is undertaking a PhD research project at the University of Tasmania on "*Plastic and Anthropogenic Contaminants in Freshwater lakes and Waterfowl in Tasmania*", and would appreciate any information you may have, or observations you make in the field of plastic in Tasmanian wetlands.

Angela has asked that any photos of plastic debris in freshwater environments, including the date and location, be posted to her Facebook site (Are Ducks Eating Plastic in Australia?) or emailed to her: [angela.hansen@utas.edu.au](mailto:angela.hansen@utas.edu.au).

## WOMSAT PROJECT

'Wombats are under threat and they need our help! Wombat survival is being impacted by a parasitic mite, causing sarcoptic mange, and human activities.

We want your help to collect information about the lives of wombats so that we can conserve these important ecosystem engineers. Wombats are Australia's largest burrow builder and are essential in maintaining soil health and modifying habitats, including building burrows that provide shelter for a range of other species.

**What information is needed to help protect Wombats?** We want to know where wombats are, if they have mange or not, and if there are burrows nearby. We also want to know about other impacts on wombats.

**How you can help.** You can easily help by recording where and when you observe a wombat, either dead or alive on the WomSAT Google Map. If the wombat is alive, please record whether you think it has sarcoptic mange or not, and if it is nearby to a wombat burrow.

**What will the information be used for?** The data collected will be used to aid conservation of the species by mapping mange incidence throughout Australia, and identifying other threats to these unique animals.

It will aid in determining where mange is more prevalent or less prevalent among the wombat population and ensure their continued survival.

We will also be documenting where wombats are becoming victims of motor vehicle collisions, or other human impacts, and help to put strategies in place to prevent these deaths. Overall we aim to improve our understanding of wombat biology and ecology’.

Source: [https://womsat.org.au/womsat/pagecontent.aspx?page=wombat\\_aboutproject](https://womsat.org.au/womsat/pagecontent.aspx?page=wombat_aboutproject)

Watch the [WomSAT instruction on YouTube](#) (approximately 3 minutes) to find out how to record sightings in your local area. Mobile phone users can also use the mobile friendly website or the wombat phone app to record data while in the field. Please email the project team – [womsat@womsat.org.au](mailto:womsat@womsat.org.au) if you require further assistance.

If you would like to use the LFN Club’s login to record your observations, please contact Karen on 63442277 for the username and password details.

### **WILDLIFE SPOTTER ~ ONLINE CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECT**

Australia is a vast country. Researchers have set up automatic cameras that are snapping wildlife day and night. We need your help to analyse the millions of photographs captured in tropical rainforests, the dry rangelands, and around our cities.

From emus to superb lyrebirds, from bettongs to bandicoots, from brush turkeys to Tassie devils, and even feral cats and foxes—scientists want to know which species are roaming both in the wild and in urban areas.

The research will help answer questions including: how many endangered bettongs are left; how well native predators like quolls and devils are competing with cats for food; and how common are common wombats.

So join in and help save threatened species and preserve Australia’s iconic wildlife! Visit <https://wildlifespotter.net.au/about/> if you would like to get involved in this interesting project.

Source: <https://wildlifespotter.net.au/>

## Additional Information

### Club Outings:

- 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.
- Provide your own food and drinks for the outing and wear/take clothing/footwear suitable for all weather types, camera and field guides.
- When travelling by car in convoy, each driver is responsible to ensure that the vehicle behind is in sight immediately after passing a cross road or fork in the road.
- When carpooling, 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:** Please wear your name tags to 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, but should contact our booking manager, John Elliott on 6344 9303 or [skempbookings@yahoo.com.au](mailto:skempbookings@yahoo.com.au) regarding availability and keys.

**Field Centre Phone Number:** 6399 3361

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

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

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

Find us on 

