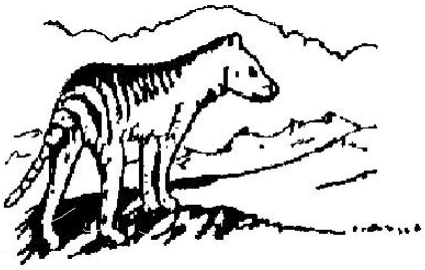


THE LAUNCESTON NATURALIST

Volume LI No. 4 April / May 2018

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 Forteath**
President	**:**	**Mr Tom Treloggen, 0408 341 397**
Hon. Secretary	**:**	**Mr Phillip Brumby, 0407 664 554**
Hon. Treasurer	**:**	**Mrs Karen Manning, 0363 442 277**

Meetings 1st Tuesday of month, February - December at Scotch-Oakburn Senior College, Penquite Rd Newstead, commencing at 7.30 pm

Program:

June ~ Tuesday 5
General Meeting ~ Guest Speaker David Maynard ~ *Tasmania's Forgotten Emu*

June ~ Saturday 16
Field Trip ~ Attend Tamar Discovery activities at Seahorse World at Beauty Point, 10am – 2pm, followed by walk in Holwell Gorge to look at fungi

June ~ Saturday 23
Skemps Day ~ Fungi hunt

July ~ Sunday 1
Field Trip ~ Goblin Forest at Blue Tier

July ~ Tuesday 3
General Meeting ~ Kathryn Pugh

July ~ Wednesday 18
Field Trip ~ Fern Foray and identification at Skemps with APS members

July ~ Sunday 29
Skemps Day ~ Tree Maintenance on Skemps Creek (National Tree Day)

August ~ Tuesday 7
Social Evening ~ Charcoal Fire (TBC), NO General Meeting this month

August ~ TBA
Field Trip ~ TBA

August ~ Saturday 18
Skemps Day

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

Skemps Report, April – May, 2018

The damaged water tank at Skemps cannot be repaired and we feel that it should be replaced and the plumbing changed so these fill from the top. Your committee has approved the purchase of the tank and installation items.

The large hang up along the drive has been removed thanks to the efforts of member Danny who spent half of last Sunday at Skemps even though he is working each second weekend with Biosecurity. A number of spars across the trails have been removed and there is still work to be done with others away from the Centre.

Deployment of the wildlife camera has given us images and movies of wallabies, possums, skinks, birds, camera operators and windblown foliage and finally some important pictures. We have feral cats, wombats and spotted tail quoll caught and you will see them in December for the *'Year that Was*'.

Puggle

April ~ Presenter unavailable

May ~ Prue presented a quiz regarding the blue ringed octopus, beginning with a series of statements – I am an animal; I am an invertebrate etc. - Ann answered correctly after the statement: I can change colour rapidly. Prue added she had read that the female *Hapalochlaena maculosa* carries its eggs around for about 6 months and dies when young hatch – the male dying after mating.

Sightings

April ~ On the last Skemps Day Noel saw a platypus in the pond and Tina saw fresh wombat scats. Noel also noted that both a WT Eagle and WB Sea Eagle were seen at the end of the road.
Prue noted 8-10 Dusky Wood Swallows "swarming" for migration at Gravelly Beach. Peter W. found 4 tiny orchids in Carr Villa – not identified. John E heard that there are Pink Eared Ducks at the Tamar Wetlands. Steve G. noted a WT Eagle over Queechy School 10 days ago.

May ~ Tom reported silvereyes and fantails in Mulgrave Street. Prue has seen dusky wood swallows swarming at Gravelly Beach. Alma had seen a flock of 17 white cockatoos over St Georges Square which then flew to Princes Square. Peter L saw a pack of galahs and a sea eagle confrontation, also a sea eagle harassing plovers, and a seal and cormorant as fishing companions. Ann found two weedy sea dragons washed up at Tam O'Shanter. Tina reported a golden whistler at Punchbowl, 4 freckled ducks at Stonesthrow and Queechy Lake, which may have been the same birds. Several sightings of a sea eagle and juvenile sea eagle at Queechy Lake, grey goshawk between Queechy Lake and Punchbowl, and a musk dusk at Grindelwald Lake. John reported "freshish" wombat scats on Bedfordia Track at Skemps. Louise saw 7 magpies flying low and landing in Trevallyn. Phil saw a white goshawk at Deloraine and Prue saw a green and gold frog at her property in Gravelly Beach.

New Members

New memberships were recently approved by the Committee for Jacob and Kaylah Clark and family, William and Sarah Stoltenberg and family, and Helen Tait. We welcome you all to the Club and look forward to seeing you at Club activities.

GENERAL MEETING ~ Tuesday 3 April - Members Night

This month was a night for members to present short items of interest. Jenn Lavers presented a talk and photos about her proposed Citizen Science project involving the trapping of insects in backyards over the long term to ascertain any changes in their mass. Peter Warren showed us several interesting crystals from various areas, Prue presented slides of insects found recently, and Peter

Ralph spoke about the meteorite that crashed into the West Coast of Tasmania some 800,000 years ago, and showed some "Darwin glass" he has collected from the impact.

FIELD TRIP ~ Saturday 21 April - Lake Mackenzie with Deb Hunter

Nineteen members, two visitors and our guide Deb Hunter met in the usual spot at Mole Creek for our third attempt at a visit to the full area suggested by her. We were there to see the damage and recovery of this area, especially along the Lake Mackenzie Road, after devastating fires which were followed by some of the worst floods in living memory.

After a couple of stops along the gravel road to look at the damage we noted the new growth since our last visit and were shown the site of the lightning strikes which started the fires. Our first major stop was the parking area of the dam and we jostled for positions on the uneven ground before heading off with Deb to visit the campers hut that could be seen in the distance over the narrow neck between two parts of the lake. We all balked at the narrow and rickety rock causeway that we had to cross with three members choosing to return to the cars while the rest managed to reach the hut for an early lunch.

All around the hut were the burnt remains of Orites revolutus with the finger thick wooden stems blackened and showing no life. However, most which had stems of 30 plus centimetres had new growth from the ground which Deb described as coming from the lignotuber.

Nine of us headed off with Deb to look at an area of unburnt pine trees. At the first of a number of difficult creek crossings, in an area call Pine Marsh Bay, one member decided not to continue and returned to the hut. Back at the hut seven had already left for the cars while four in total remained for a better look at the hut and to note the local vegetation, they also saw imprints of horse hooves and horse manure.

The small creeks which joined the various waterways consisted of metre deep channels where the peat had been washed away. Crossing meant leaping over these deep channels, in places having to cross two or three using rocks and narrow peat islands along the way and we experienced much difficulty to reach the pines. Our efforts were greatly rewarded as it was an impressive stand of unburnt Pencil Pines on a gentle scree slope with a thick understorey of shrubs of between one and two metres. After the final difficult creek crossing we returned to the hut, tidied up and headed for the cars finding the causeway crossing much easier on the return journey.

We then drove off knowing that we would finally reach the Devils Gullet lookout. After a long, steep climb we arrived at a new viewing platform on the cliff face with spectacular views 300 metres down to the Fisher River, surrounded by impressive cliffs and jagged rocks, with the valley mostly covered by trees unaffected by fire.

President Tom thanked Deb and after a look at the old Devils Gullet viewing site we headed back to the cars for the journey home. A big thank you to visitor Greg for taking a member home who was feeling unwell.

Our family decided to eat out and as the Mole Creek Hotel would not be serving meals for another hour we headed to Deloraine and a familiar eatery.

Thanks to Deb this was a great field trip and we look forward to a future visit to check for further recovery. Noel Manning

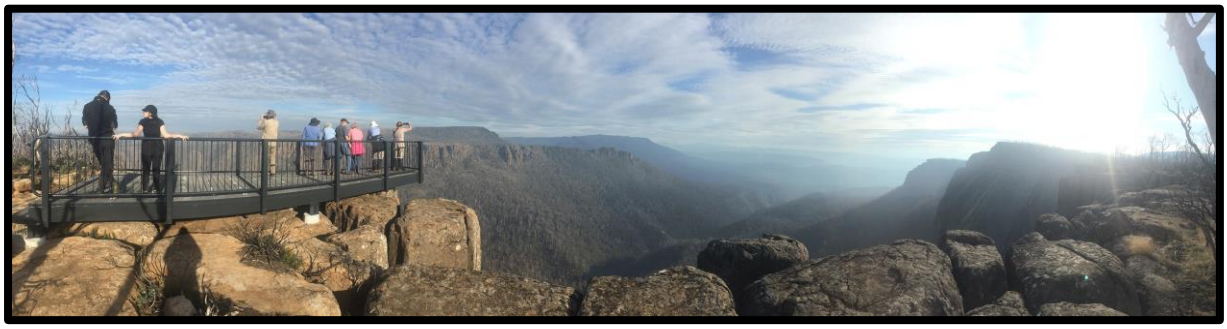
The following flora and fauna were seen.

Lake Mackenzie area: *Acaena novae-zelandiae*, common buzzy; *Anodopetalum biglandulosum*, horizontal; *Astelia alpina*, pineapple grass; *Bauera rubioides*, wiry bauera*; Bellendena montana*, mountain rocket; *Blechnum pennamarina*, alpine hard fern; *Carex breviculmis*, shortstem sedge; *Carpha alpina*, alpine strawsedge; *Coprosma nitida*, mountain currant; *Cotula alpina*, alpine buttons; *Donatia novae-zelandiae*, snow cushionplant; *Eleocharis* sp., spikesedge ; *Empodisma minus*, spreading roperush; *Eucalyptus coccifera*, snow peppermint; *Ewartia* sp., cushionherb; *Gaultheria tasmanica*, Tasmanian waxberry; *Geranium potentilloides*, mountain cranesbill; *Gonocarpus*

montanus, mountain raspwort; *Herpolirion novae-zelandiae*, sky lily leaves; *Hydrocotyle hirta*, pennywort; *Isophysis tasmanica*, Tasmanian Purplestar; Leptospermum rupestre, mountain teatree; Lycopodium sp., clubmoss; *Marchantia* sp., liverwort; *? Montia australasica*, white purslane; ? *Oreomyrrhis ciliata*, fringed caraway; *Orites revolutus*, revolute orites; *Ozothamnus hookeri*, scaly Everlastingbush; *Pelargonium australe*, southern storksbill; *Planocarpa petiolaris*, alpine cheeseberry; *Plantago gunnii*, bolster plantain; *Poa gunnii*, gunns snowgrass; *Podocarpus lawre*ncei, mountain plumpine; *Rubus gunnianus*, alpine raspberry; ? *Senecio gunnii*, mountain fireweed; *Senecio jacobaea* (Ragwort) Introduced; *? Sprengelia incarnata*, pink Swampheath; *Stylidium graminifolium*, trigger plant; *Tasmannia lanceolata*, mountain pepper; *Viola* sp., violet; *Xerochrysum subundulatum*, golden everlasting.
Black spider, Cricket, Lizard, White butterfly, Grasshopper x 3 species, Field cricket, Bennett's wallaby

Pine Marsh Bay: *Athrotaxis cupressoides*, pencil pines

Devils Gullet: *Acacia? mucronata*, wattle; *Eucalyptus coccifera*, snow peppermint; *Geranium* sp., cranesbill; *Gonocarpus* sp., raspwort; *Nothofagus cunninghamii*, myrtle beech; *Polystitchum proliferum*, mother shieldfern; *Telopea truncata*, waratah.



Members at Devil's Gullet Lookout (image Claire Manning)

SKEMPS DAY ~ Saturday 28 April - Water Monitoring

It was a cold and overcast morning at Myrtle Bank, John had already arrived and had started the fire and set up the equipment for the monitoring. While John and Noel went off to get the water sample from below Bob's Bog, other members arrived and as Vivien and I were going to fetch the wildlife camera, they put on their boots and walked with us. We could see many tiny fungi in the grass as we walked across to the Top Pond and up to the boardwalk. Camera collected we continued back to the Centre along the front of the Federation Corridor, stopping to check on the progress of the four *Acacia melanoxylon* planted some five years ago in memory of John Simmons. They were all looking good.

The guys had already returned with the water sample and were having a coffee while waiting for the sample to settle in the trays. Before lunch we had collected as many species as we could find and John started the identification process with the following taxa seen, Acarina (Mites), Amphipoda (Sideswimmers), Coleoptera (Beetles), Diptera (Chironomidae, Blackfly, Mosquito larvae), Ephemeroptera (Mayflies), Hemiptera (Small Water Striders), Oligochaeta (Segmented worms), Odonata (Dragonflies, Damselflies), Plecoptera (Stoneflies), Trichoptera (Cased and free-living caddis).

Following a quiet lunch, we walked along the roadway to the end of the property. We stopped along the way to check our recent plantings under the Forico area, which all seemed to be growing well.

Sample date	Taxa	Signal 2	Interpretation	Water Quality
26/04/2014	9	5.7	Good quality. Little or no environmental degradation	Excellent
20/09/2014	8	6.3	Good quality. Little or no environmental degradation	Excellent
26/04/2015	10	4.7	Fair quality. Some degradation due to agriculture	Good
24/10/2015	8	5.8	Good quality. Little or no environmental degradation	Excellent
30/04/2016	11	5.6	Good quality. Little or no environmental degradation	Excellent
29/10/2016	6	6.5	Questionable quality, Indications of disturbance or poor sampling	Fair
30/04/2017	9	5.4	Fair quality. Some degradation due to agriculture	Good
29/10/2017	9	5.1	Fair quality. Some degradation due to agriculture	Good
28/04/2018	8	5.8	Good quality. Little or no environmental degradation	Excellent

The Signal 2 score is typical of this site. Most results from this site indicates excellent water quality or good water quality. Thanks to John Elliott for the list of macro-invertebrate and the above table showing results from water-monitoring over previous years.

JOHN SKEMP MEMORIAL LECTURE ~ Tuesday 1 May ~ presented by Clare Hawkins,
~ Tracking nature together: Citizen Science for Tasmania's threatened species

Tom introduced Clare who presented the annual John Skemp Memorial Lecture. Her talk was on Citizen Science and the *Where? Where? Wedgie!* A project to monitor Tasmania's endangered wedge-tailed eagle.

Clare started by telling us that she would be running 14 workshops to introduce people to the program *Where? Where? Wedgie!* and citizen scientists would be asked to monitor one of the plots we were shown on a map of Tasmania and the Bass Strait islands. Tasmania had been divided up into 4 x 4 kilometre squares and participants would nominate one of these on one of three days from Friday 25 to Sunday 27 May. A team would involve three people (a spotter, someone with binoculars and another to record the results) going six times, to hopefully six different locations around the plot recording the birds seen from the list included in the study.

As a background to involvement in the wedgie survey Clare told us that she had worked for nearly nine years in the threatened species section of DPIPWE which she liked, although she found that many people found threatened species to be in her words 'very challenging and frustrating and annoying' and some of the things she was asked to do were 'really, really difficult'. The two main issues were the lack of information about the 209 Tasmanian threatened species and that the information was not being communicated. This resulted in reduced action and support for threatened species conservation, with fewer than 16% of them being monitored.

These threatened species ticked all the boxes and various things have been done for them although no one knows if it is working, whether it is worthwhile and whether monies are spent correctly. With little monitoring of non-threatened species it may be that we are unaware of others that should be listed while the uncertainty does not give those subject to regulation confidence in the process.

If someone does not know about a threatened species in their area they may spend thousands of dollars on preparing a plan for a development only to find that there is an issue just before the work starts resulting in additional costs, delays and perhaps compromise on both sides. Everyone loses, the developer has to compromise their project, the regulator compromises to avoid being the bad guy and the threatened species is compromised, is not doing well and becomes public enemy number one.

Conflicts are common as threatened species are not confined to protected areas and we learnt that the National Reserve System covers 12% of terrestrial Australia but only adequately protects 20% of its threatened species. It does not make sense to make a reserve in a graveyard to protect an orchid, a reserve of 20 metres of creek to protect a snail or a reserve around every eagle nest, although we do need to protect them if we want them to stay with us.

While we are lucky to have many parks and reserves in Tasmania these serve many purposes such as aesthetic, the landscape and heritage. Some species are not properly catered for by reserves and it would be impractical and unpopular to make more reserves so off reserve efforts are required too, often something simple such as do not mow during the orchid flowering season, keep animals out of that 20 metres of stream and do not plough where the burrowing cray fish is known to be.

Clare told us that people become upset if their project is threatened due to a species being found after the early work has been done and that while in the Threatened Species Section she started a web site devoted to them highlighting how every day activities such as cutting vegetation, earthworks, construction and sub-division might impact and showing where the threatened species might be.

Clare then explained that she had wondered whether the public could get involved by being the eyes of a project all over the state instead of hiring a couple of professionals and this led to citizen science and the eagle project.

She found that many people had issues with citizen science, some thinking it can't generate reliable data, while others thought it doesn't matter if the science is poor, it's great for engagement. She was strongly against both these statements as it depends on what you ask people to do and how you design the study as to whether you get reliable data and she felt it was not proper to have people waste their valuable time if it was not good science.

She applied for a Churchill Fellowship and in 2015 designed enduring methods which engaged nature lovers to monitor population sizes and needs. She studied what was being done, in some cases for a century or more, in the US, Hungary and the UK to see how it was done and if it was working and she learnt 'loads' from this including mistakes to avoid. She also wanted to know how to engage people in the citizen science and how to keep them interested so that studies could be done for years to see how things were changing. Some of the motivational factors included making a contribution to science, social interaction and that it was fun, i.e. people were doing what they liked such as getting outside and looking at animals, making the whole process rewarding.

The issue of reliability was considered essential for confidence in and persistence with the work. This meant the project needed a good design, participants needed training, and photographs could be used to back up a sighting with experts moderating the results.

Clare told us about the smart phone app which with a single click gets a photograph, the date and time, the name of the observer and the location and the latest version can suggest the name of what you have seen. It is easy to download the information and the Facebook connection allows you to link in to people from all over the world that can assist with identification and Clare had examples of people sharing information for the good of science.

Clare told us of the Bio Blitz where a concerted effort is made to record as many living things as possible within a set location over a 24-36 hour period. She had done one at the Hobart domain, then at Latrobe and Kingston Beach (425 species recorded) and she admits that, while fun, it may not be all that accurate as an ongoing record as the effort and level of expertise will vary from year to year. It does however give people an idea of the variety in their own backyard and engage them.

Moving back to the eagles Clare told us about the irregularities in the records, including that the lack of sightings recorded in the world heritage area was probably because there were fewer people

there although it may be because it is less fertile. A graph showed that annual records vary greatly as well with the first big number of recording from 1978 to 1982 probably because of the bird atlas, so these records give no indication of the population or how it is changing. For the eagle survey Clare does not want people to go where eagles have been seen but to choose a random square and it will still add to the data set if eagles are not seen.

With the burrowing crayfish, the records again are very poor with them occupying extremely localized conditions, again giving no indication of numbers or changes in the population. Surveys are also difficult as much of the crayfish range is on private land.

Clare mentioned the efforts of Stuart Newsome, of the British Trust for Ornithology, who was doing a bat survey. He had divided the survey area up into 1 kilometre squares and asked people book a square, borrow a bat detector and do the citizen science. There were priority squares and the internet allowed participants to see which squares were being done. She also met someone who suggested such surveys be turned into an event, with a commitment to a specific day, for participants to choose a vacant site, do online training for recognition, make it a big day and provide good feedback.

She brought all this back to Nature Trackers, sponsored by Bookend Trust, and she hopes the eagle survey will be continued next year and that there will be another on the burrowing cray fish, called 'Claws on the line' and she thinks bitterns, and green and gold frogs might go well with the crayfish survey. School children will be encouraged to participate in the various events.

The second last slide had a computer dialog box made by Clare with the words 'Species threatened with Extinction' and the three buttons to press had the words 'Save', 'Don't Save' and 'Ignore All' written in them.

After 20 minutes of questions and answers Phil gave the thanks on behalf of the member.

Noel Manning

RAPTOR MONITORING WORKSHOP ~ Sunday 6 May

We attended this workshop at the Hagley School which was hosted by the Central North Field Naturalists Club, to learn about the *Where*? *Where*? *Wedgie*! Monitoring proposed for the end of May. Over twenty people gathered in the school library of this huge complex to hear Clare Hawkins tell us of the program, its aims and the ideal way to go about the task on the proposed days. This involved ten minutes of monitoring, on the hour and half hour, six times in total and we were asked to try to monitor our patch from different points. It was suggested that three people be involved, someone with binoculars, a lookout and a scribe.

To make sure we were not disappointed, if the eagles did not appear during our monitoring, we were given a list of other birds to note on the days as well. Clare's presentation included asking each person in attendance to give their reason for participating.

There followed a short morning tea break with a plate of food to share from each participant before we returned to the library to hear Peter Tonelli give information on raptors.

After a lunch break we went to Egmont Reserve on the Meander River to prepare for a walk. With perfect timing a wedge-tailed eagle came into view in the distance as we were getting ready. After crossing the river we entered the Egmont farm property further up the road by climbing over a fence and then returned to the river bank for a nature walk with other participants. The area had a thick covering of gorse which made our progress slow.

After passing an old mill on the farm, Sue Gebicki led us up a steep, rocky track above and beside the Meander River. We then walked through an open forest of white gum and peppermint with an understorey of native cherry, prickly box and other smaller native species such as native olive and dogwood. Rocky areas sheltered native pelargonium and necklace fern, and despite the low rainfall many types of fungi were seen.

While other participants continued further up the hill, we both decided to turn back as it was already 4.30pm, we thanked Sue for the interesting walk and headed for home. Noel and Tom T

FIELD TRIP ~ Sunday 13 May - The Arboretum at Eugenana

Eleven members and a visitor met at the Tasmanian Arboretum for today's field trip. Arriving around 11am the carpark was starting to fill in a venue obviously popular for Mother's Days activities.

The morning was sunny and warm as we wandered off in small groups with our guide maps in hand. One group took the track along the hill, visiting the Fern Gully, Gondwanan, Australian, Tasmanian and Tasmanian Alpine collections. It was interesting to view the different species of beech trees during this walk. Another group walked along the Sylvan Circuit to the Tasmanian section and followed a nature trail circuit which took them down to the Don River. Founders Lake was popular as well and Prue identified the birds seen and, then seeing a list of the birds often there, noted what she had not seen from the hide.

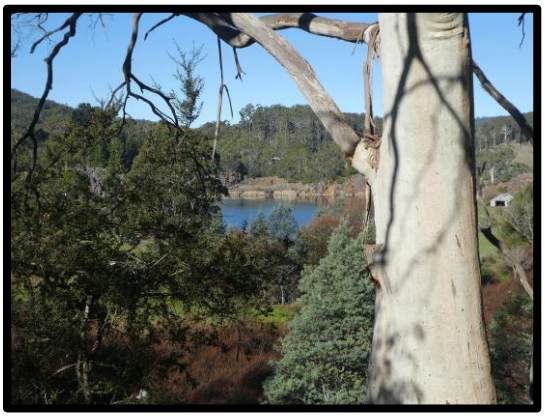
During lunch we sat wherever we could find an empty table, ours luckily in the sun. Here we could see a large numbers of silk stands floating in the breeze with spiders attached.

Following lunch we met up with other members and walked to Hallet's Quarry where we could see folding on the limestone quarry walls which our map informed us, had occurred during tectonic plate movement. It was here that we saw a white-bellied sea-eagle being harassed by forest ravens. We then headed in the direction of the Limestone Hill lookout a short distance away, but found that we had read the map wrong and were on the wrong side of the hill on the Don River. This didn't deter four of us, we climbed up a rocky slope covered in ferns and found the official lookout, while other members walked around. Here again we could see the folded rock. With a booking at the Arboretum Kiosk mid-afternoon, we headed in that general direction crossing onto Founders Lake, where Tina later reported she had seen a platypus.

Close to the Kiosk we met up with Clare Hawkins who had been at the Arboretum given a workshop at their Education Centre for the upcoming state wide monitoring over the weekend of Friday 25 to Sunday 27 May. Clare and a group of workshop participants were on their way back after a session in the bush and they had unfortunately not seen the white-bellied sea-eagle.

We chatted while enjoying our coffee, scones with delicious jam and cream, cake and ice-creams for afternoon tea, then went our separate ways following an enjoyable day. Karen Manning

Folds in the limestone (KM)



View from Limestone Hill Lookout (KM)

FIELD TRIP ~ Monday 21 May - East Beach for Rock-pooling and Beachcombing

Four members met at East Beach on an overcast Monday morning to walk out with the tide for some rock pooling on the small headland. The tide was to be 0.36 metres, the best low-tide for the year at a reasonable time of day.

The wind was blowing pretty hard as we walked out onto the rocky area and it became obvious that we had to be very careful with each step on the slippery rocks. We quickly spread out searching

the rockpools for interesting sea critters and carefully lifted many rocks to check what was living underneath.

Our previous visit was in November 2016 and we noted the absence of the purple sea urchin, *Heliocidaris erythrogramma* which was abundant during that visit. We also saw very few of the waratah anemone and there was also not the variety of starfish as seen in previous years. We presume the lack of variety is due to our visit being at a different time of year with colder water.

The NZ half crab was under every rock we lifted along with the southern chiton. We found 3 different sea squirts, one was quite brain like and leathery to hold, the siphons visible.

Ann found a number of fish, mostly in one rock pool, that had been caught out by the lowering tide, the largest being around five inches. She moved one fish from a small to a larger rock pool.

We left the headland after about 2 hours and went for a warming coffee at the Low Head Pilot Station café and a bite to eat. Noel and I headed back to the beach later to walk the high tide mark where we saw soft sponges and pieces of seaweed. We also picked up a couple of pieces of petrified wood lower down the beach. Karen Manning

Barnacles: *Catomerus polymerus*, surf barnacle; *Tetraclitella purpusascens*, purple barnacle
Chitons: ? *Cryptoplax striata*, mottled worm chiton; *Ischnochiton australis*, southern chiton
Crabs: *Lomis hirta*, hairy stone crab; *Paragrapus quadridentatus*, notched shore crab; *Petrolisthes elongatus*, NZ half crab
Shells: *Haliotis* sp., abalone; *Limnoperna pulex*, flea mussel; *Nerite atramentosa*, western black nerite; *Scutus antipodes*, elephant shell
Marine worms: *Galeolaria caespitosa*, calcareous tubes polychaete worms
Seastars: *Comanthus tasmaniae*, Tasmanian feather star; *Luidia australiae*, southern sand star; *Meridiastra calcar*, eight armed seastar; *Meridiastra gunnii*, gunns six-armed star; *Ophionereis schayeri*, Schayer's brittle star
Sponges: *Aplysilla rosea*, encrusting rose sponge; *Tethya bergquistae*, golfball sponge; Brown sponge
Green Algae: *Caulerpa* sp., *Codium fragile*, velvet codium; *Ulva* sp., Sea lettuce
Brown algae: *Colpomenia sinuosa*, oyster thief; *Cystophora* torulosa, zig-zag weed; *Durvillaea* sp., bull kelp; *Hormosira banksii*, neptune's necklace; ? *Sargassum paradoxum*
Red algae: *Coraline officinalis*, tufted coralline
Miscellaneous: *Actinia tenebrosa*, waratah anemone; *Amblypneustes ovum***,** egg sea urchin; *Lipotrapeza vestiens*, shellgrit sea cucumber; *Pleuroploca* sp., Tulip shell egg capsules; Sea squirts x2
Birds: *Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae*, silver gull; *Larus pacificus*, pacific gull

***Meridiastra calcar* (KM)**

***Scutus antipodes* (KM)**

SKEMPS DAY ~ Sunday 27 May - Where? Where? Wedgie! Monitoring and Fungi Hunt

A beautiful morning at Skemps today, sun shining and only a few wispy clouds in the sky. We are registered to participate in a statewide wedge-tailed eagle survey, although we had been given a list of other target species to note while looking to the skies. We also hoped to spot some fungi while walking to our survey points on the property.

For the first survey we stood outside the field centre for the ten minutes and although we could hear twitter in the trees, they were not of birds of prey or those on the list. We did see two forest ravens.

Our second and third surveys were taken from the hillside above Skemps and the paddock at the end of the Zig-Zag track, where we did not see any birds at all. Our fourth survey was done from the hill in the next property which we had gained permission to access. Walking to this area we saw many brown thornbills, fairy wrens, and scarlet robins. Tina saw a bassian thrush on the driveway and Greg reported a wedgie outside our observation zone some time before noon. We did see a few different bracket fungi, *Bisporella citrina* and *Postia* sp.

Climbing to the hill top was difficult as the ground was very uneven, rough, and rocky, and covered in small dogwoods. Arriving at the top with minutes to spare, we had the most amazing 360° view, taking in Mt Arthur across to Mt Barrow and round to Ben Nevis. The sky was clear and there was no wind, just perfect, but again no birds and it was so quiet up there.

Near the end of the Bedfordia track we found a deep hole with signs of fresh digging and wombat scats nearby.

Heading back to the Centre for lunch, we could hear the chainsaw going and finally came across neighbour Greg and assistant Duncan cutting back limbs of trees hanging over the driveway. He was clearing the area to allow access for a truck needed for contracted work on his land.

Following our lunch, Danny kitted up in his arborist gear and with his tools tackled the overhanging limb on the driveway. The limb was caught up between trees on both side of the road and proved difficult to remove, however with much persistence from Danny it finally came to the ground. The area was cleaned up and Noel cut the fallen limb ready for firewood. Jill, Peter and Vivien walked the Power Track and driveway looking for fungi and found a *Cordyceps gunnii*. Tom T and I walked back to Greg's hill to complete the last two surveys and during the hour on the hill we saw no birds at all.

Many thanks to members who helped during the bird survey and also a big thankyou to Danny for removing a safety hazard that had been commented on by members and some visitors. Hopefully next month we will have more time to dedicate to looking for fungi. Karen Manning

Tom had a great view to look for the elusive wedgie (KM)

Lichen and mosses (KM)

Danny working on the drive with Noel looking on (KM)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tamar Discovery, Saturday 16 June at Seahorse World
~ 10am to 2pm, shed 1A Inspection Head Wharf, Beauty Point (upstairs)

NRM North and Seahorse World invite you to dive into the mysteries and wonder of the Tamar River estuary's incredible environment during this free, all-ages, interactive discovery event. Activities include: guest presentations by experts, interactive displays, hands-on activities and games for the whole family, hear about giant kelp, sponge gardens, tidal energy generation and marine debris, lucky door prizes and competitions. Discounted Seahorse World tours will also be on offer.

For more information, contact Megan (NRM North Facilitator) on 6333 7775 or at mdykman@nrmnorth.org.au. PDF of flyer available here.

Spiders, Queen Victoria Museum, Inveresk
~ from Saturday 30 June - Sunday 28 October 2018

Spiders exhibition is a joint project between the Australian Museum and Questacon – The National Science & Technology Centre. QVMAG is excited to host this hair-raising exhibition in 2018.

This is a face-to-face interactive encounter with real spider specimens including live Australian Tarantulas, Giant Water Spiders and deadly Funnel-webs and Redbacks.

Questacon-engineered interactives will allow the visitor to engage in full body experiences that involve competing in a mating ritual with a dancing Peacock Spider using Kinect gaming technology; hold a virtual spider in your hand; test the strength of silk; feel web vibrations and experience the jaws of a spider.

This combination of immersion and information showcases the latest science that allows the visitor an up close glimpse into the fascinating world of spiders.

Come face-to-face with some of the world's most deadly, colourful and fascinating real live spiders and their webs. Get closer than ever to hundreds of immaculately presented dried spider specimens. – From www.qvmag.tas.gov.au/Exhibitions/Coming-soon/Spiders

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. Provide your own food and drinks for the outing and wear/take clothing/footwear suitable for all weather types.
3. 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.
4. 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, Phil Brumby on 0407 664 554 or bookings@lfnc.org.au regarding availability and keys.

Field Centre Phone Number: (03) 6399 3361

Postal Address: PO Box 1072 Launceston 7250

Internet site: http://www.lfnc.org.au

Facebook site: https://www.facebook.com/groups/527797787360157/

Emails: secretary@lfnc.org.au

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