

# THE LAUNCESTON NATURALIST

Volume LIII No.5 June/July 2020

**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. Prue Wright, 0438 410 192**  
**Hon. Secretary : Mr. Phillip Brumby, 0407 664 554**  
**Hon. Treasurer : Mrs. Karen Manning, 0363 442 277**

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

## **Program**

### **September**

**Tuesday 1 Meeting – Guest speaker Scott Carver - Wombat mange**

**Monday 14 Working Bee at Skemps property**

**TBC Field Trip - NE Coastal Walk - Lulworth to Fanny Bay. Leader Kay Bailey**

**Monday 21 Field Trip – Notley Hills with Ralph Cooper to look at the birdlife, meet at Bridgenorth Football Club at 10.30 am**

**Saturday 26 Skemps Day – General maintenance on the property**

### **October**

**Tuesday 6 Meeting – Guest speakers Mike and Helen Statham - Volunteering on Deal Island**

**Wednesday 21 Field Trip – Spring visit to Curries River Dam with Mark Wapstra and APS members**

**Sunday 25 Skemps Day and Annual General Meeting**

**Fri 30 to Nov Mon 2 Weekend trip – Mt Cameron – wildflowers, geology etc., more information soon**

For further details visit <https://ifnc.org.au/meetings.htm>

## Skemps Report: April-July 2020

Life member Jeff is back in Tasmania, living in the north and regularly attending Tuesday working bees at Skemps. He is a great asset as he knows the buildings, the grounds and the regular issues. He recently took on the big task of clearing the little used Mini Forest Nature Trail and a recent tree fall near the Federation Corridor.

Matthew and Bernadette have kept the tracks clear and the signs clean while Rob has been splitting the wood at the back of the Centre and these three have been helping with many other tasks. Karen and Claire have been regulars keeping the Centre clean and tidy and hunting out foxglove. On a recent visit Karen started the check of the assets list. Four trailer loads of fire wood were moved to the Centre by Bernadette, Jeff, Karen and Rob and with the recently split wood there will be plenty for future visitors.

I am probably the first person to walk from the bottom falls to Targa Hill Road in many years and it was a major undertaking with me lost on the overgrown track. Roy turned up and came with me to the track and decided that it would be a better nature trail if it went through the bush and set about marking a new route. The next two weeks we worked with Matthew to build steps to make it more accessible finding much dumped rubbish to remove including some old bottles to add to Jill's collection. Sometime in the last days of July, two car tyres were dumped at the end of this trail and these will be used for building steps there or the Power Track.

The buckled hot plate has been removed from the wood barbecue and the structure turned into an outdoor fireplace. The barbecue brickwork and hot plate were damaged from being run too hot.

Other work includes repairs to a lock, a section of carpet and a door, wheel barrow inner tube replacement, cleaning of roof gutters and the removal of guards from trees and the stacking of guards, sticks and other wire.

Keeping in mind that Skemps is a great asset for the Club if you can help on a Tuesday give me a call and I will add your mobile to the text message list to remind you of our visits. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Noel Manning

## Monday 8 June – Members Day at Skemps

With the easing of Coronavirus travel restrictions, President Prue Wright invited all members to visit for lunch and walks. Twelve members and a visitor attended. Overnight had been very cold and frost was still lying on the ground, although the sun was very warming. Members maintained physical distancing while sitting outside in the sun, chatting with each other on how they spent their time during the social isolation restrictions of the past couple of months.

We lunched outside after which small groups headed off to the Power Track to look at the many fungus on display and others walked the Watergate Track and across to the Top Pond.

It was a very pleasant day and so nice to be back with fellow members.



*Clavaria amoena* (Image Karen Manning)

## Saturday 20 June - Briseis Water Race

Despite the forecast, 10 members arrived at the meeting point at Branxholm to meet our leader Ann. General chatting was the order of the day as we waited for 11 a.m. to set off.

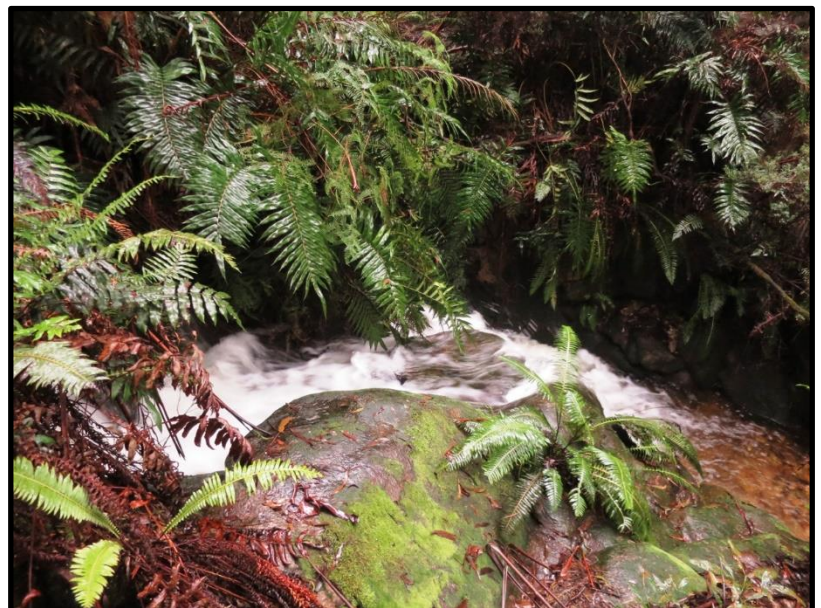
Proceeding up the hill towards St Helens we turned right onto the road leading to the start of the walk. The race was built to convey water from the Ringarooma River 48 kilometres away to be used for tin mining and must have taken quite a while to construct.

The weather at this stage was fine but overcast with the promise of rain. As we proceeded some members became slower and slower as we encountered more and more fungi and other plants. The earth stars were very fresh and well worth a photo. Two species of helmet orchids were found in flower and greenhood rosettes were in abundance. A few bird orchid leaves were seen as well. Quite a variety of ferns were seen though not all were recorded.

The race itself no longer carries water but at one stage we had to cross a small stream on a very slippery sloped wooden bridge requiring great care as one member slipped off. The leaders waited for the slow coaches to catch up near an opening into a small valley. After some discussion and as it was already past 12 o'clock it was decided to turn back. We hadn't gone very far before the rain began, quite heavy but only lasted a few minutes.

Most fared OK being suitably attired but some ended up a bit damp. The track itself goes along the spoil from the race construction and is easy going, just a very gentle rise following the contour. The area is very interesting and would be well worth a visit later. Jeff Campbell

**Creek above the Bridge**  
(Image Kay Bailey)



**Walking beside the Water Race**  
(Image Tom McGlynn)

**Tony and Kay looking at the ferns  
(Image Tom McGlynn)**



## **Sunday 28 June – Skemps Day**

Today member Danny was attending to help us identify eucalypts on the property and to talk to us about wedge-tailed eagles.

It was another cold start at Skemps with frost remaining on the ground until mid- morning. Members started arriving and with Danny due around noon, we donned walking boots for short walks, removing foxglove along the way.

A few jobs around the Centre were also undertaken and following lunch we headed off with Danny up the Power Track, along the driveway and onto the Forest Track. To identify eucalypts, we needed to look at the bark at the base and up the trunk of the tree and have a nut cluster and leaves. Our main problem was that our eucalypts are very tall and we could not rely on the nut cluster and leaves found at the base of the tree as coming from that specific tree, thus making identification difficult. It was an interesting walk with lots of discussion about what members thought the individual trees were and why.

Back at the Centre over a hot drink, Danny talked about the wedge-tailed eagles he was seeing around his area. He is yet to discover where the nest is. Danny told us that eagles can have up to three nests and are known to fly up to 300 kilometres a day. He then told us about wind farms and the guidelines put in place for the Eagle Mortality Offset Plan (EMOP) endorsed by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) in 2017. These guidelines will provide for a conservation covenant to be placed around a wedge-tailed eagle nest for every carcass or injured wedge-tailed eagle identified. A big thank you to Danny for his walk and talk.

As the afternoon was still warm and sunny, Noel, Prue and visitor Mark worked on the Insect Hotel being erected near the Container shed. Tom cut the ferns back along the back of the building to let some extra light into the bunkrooms as they are very dark at this time of year, and Danny, Karen and Jeff moved some split logs into the wood-shed at the Centre. Karen Manning

## **Sunday 18 July - Curries River Reservoir**

Sixteen members met near Georgetown to visit a private property that backed onto the Curries River Reservoir. Entering the property we noted a *Goodenia ovata* in flower before heading toward the reservoir which is Georgetown's water supply.

Gathering at the water edge we were briefed on the area before setting off to search for and

list the plants seen. A small group of black swans took to the skies as we left. On the far side of the water, we could hear motorbikes being ridden on the many tracks that transverse the surrounding bush land. The continual roar of their engines didn't seem to upset the birds on the water or the pair of white bellied sea-eagles seen in the trees across the water.

In the sandy dirt water edge we located ferns, grasses and water plants, before negotiating very slippery areas and entering the bush. Here we saw *Leptomeria drupacea*, *Epacris impressa*, *Erica Lusitania*(i) and *Leontodon saxatilis* in flower and *Pimelea flava* just coming into flower. Returning along a very wet bush track, we saw many mosses and some smaller fungi.

During this walk we collected empty drink containers and other rubbish which recreational users have dropped in the reservoir and washed up, or tossed on the land. A little more respect for the area they are using wouldn't go astray.

Arriving back at our waterfront lunch spot a small camp fire was set. For a short time it was welcome warmth for our lunch break until the smoke became too much and it was moved away. After lunch we headed off into a heavily treed and boggy area well back from the water and featuring bush where we saw Engaeus mounds and diggings from echidnas we presume.

Roy suggested a return visit to look for ephemerals in the flowering season, which was considered a good idea by members.

Karen Manning

## Birds

*Anas castanea*, chestnut teal; *Anthochaera* sp., wattlebird; *Colluricincla harmonica*, grey shrike-thrush; *Corvus tasmanicus*, forest raven; *Cygnus atratus*, black swan; *Euseyornis melanops*, black-fronted dotterel; *Haliaeetus leucogaster*, white-bellied sea-eagle (pair); *Lichenostomus flavicollis*, yellow-throated honeyeater; *Malurus cyaneus*, superb fairy-wren; *Microcarbo melanoleucos*, little pied cormorant; *Petroica boobang*, scarlet robin; *Petroica phoenicea*, flame robin; *Phalacrocorax carbo*, great cormorant; *Platycercus caledonicus*, green rosella; *Vanellus miles*, masked lapwing

## Graminoids

*Baumea juncea*, bare twigsedge; *Eleocharis sphacelata*, common spike rush; *Empodisma minus*, spreading roperush; *Eurychorda complanata*, flat cordrush; *Gahnia grandis*, cutting grass; *Isolepis* sp., clubsedge; ?? *Juncus pallidus*, pale rush; *Lepidosperma filiforme*, common rapiersedge; *Lepidosperma laterale*, variable swordedge; *Lepidosperma longitudinale*, pithy swordedge; *Leptocarpus tenax*, slender twinerush; *Lomandra longifolia*, sagg; *Rytidosperma semiannulare*, marsh wallabygrass; *Tetrarrhena distichophylla*, hairy ricegrass

## Dicots

*Acacia dealbata* subsp. *dealbata*, silver wattle; *Acacia longifolia* subsp. *Sophorae* coast wattle; *Acacia melanoxylon*, blackwood; *Acacia mucronata*, caterpillar wattle; *Acacia stricta*, hop wattle; *Acacia verticillata* subsp. *verticillata*, prickly moses; *Acaena novae-zelandiae*, common buzzy; *Acrotriche serrulata*, ants delight; ?? *Allocasuarina littoralis*, black sheoak; *Allocasuarina verticillata*, drooping sheoak; *Bossiaea cordigera*, wiry bossia; *Billardiera mutabilis*, green appleberry; *Cassytha glabella*, slender dodderlaurel; *Cassytha melantha*, large dodderlaurel; *Centrolepis strigosa*, hairy bristlewort; *Comesperma volubile*, blue lovecreeper; *Drosera peltata*, pale sundew; *Epacris impressa*, common heath; *Erica lusitanica*, Spanish heath (i); *Eryngium vesiculosum*, prickfoot; *Eucalyptus amygdalina*, black peppermint; *Eucalyptus nitens*, shining gum (i); *Exocarpos cupressiformis*, native cherry; *Gamochaeta* sp., cudweed; *Gonocarpus micranthus* subsp. *micranthus*, creeping raspwort; *Goodenia ovata*, hop native primrose; *Hakea teretifolia*, dagger needlebush; *Hydrocotyle* sp. Pennywort; *Leontodon saxatilis*, hairy hawkbit;

*Leptomeria drupacea*, erect currantbush; *Leptospermum scoparium*, common teatree; *Melaleuca ericifolia*, coast paperbark; *Melaleuca gibbosa*, slender honeymyrtle; *Melaleuca squarrosa*, scented paperbark; *Olearia lirata*, forest daisybush; ?? *Olearia floribunda*, flowery daisybush; *Ornduffia reniformis*, running marshflower; *Oxalis* sp., woodsorrel; *Ozothamnus* sp., everlastingbush; *Pimelea flava* subsp. *flava*, yellow riceflower; *Pimelea nivea*, bushmans bootlace; *Pultenaea daphnoides*, heartleaf bushpea; *Senecio* sp., fireweed; ?? *Veronica calycina*, hairy speedwell; *Viola hederacea*, ivyleaf violet

### **Ferns**

*Hypolepis rugosula*, ruddy groundfern; *Lindsaea linearis*, screw fern; *Pteridium esculentum* subsp. *esculentum*, bracken; *Selaginella uliginosa*, swamp selaginella

### **Fungi**

*Aleurina* sp., cup; *Lichenomphalia chromacea*; *Pycnoporus coccineus*; *Scleroderma cepa*; *Tyromyces merulinus*

### **Orchid**

*Acianthus caudatus*, mayfly orchid; *Chiloglottis* sp., bird-orchid - both leaves only

### **Lichen**

*Cladonia* and *Usnea* sps.

**Also noted** Wombat, Pademelon and Bennett's wallaby scats, Echidna diggings, Engaeus mounds and a recently deceased copperhead snake on the dam shoreline.



***Leontodon saxatilis* (Image Karen Manning)**



Looking at why the snake is dead (Image Noel Manning)

## Skemps Day & General Meeting – Sunday 26 July

Nineteen members attended the property today to either help with a few odd jobs, or to take advantage of the lovely weather for a walk and to attend the meeting. A small group collected more of the plant guards, sticks and bags from the creek below the top pond and moved them up to the barn area. This was followed by sorting the items into those that could be reused and therefore appropriately stored, and those that would be disposed of.

Lunch was a very noisy affair and with the great weather most found seats out in the sun. This was followed on by our first General Meeting since Covid. With many items to discuss the meeting went on for a while, with a few complaints as they day became cooler and clouded over. Karen

## Boneseed Blitz Week

If you have a few hours to spare over the week, Sunday 27 September to Sunday 4 October and would like to assist with the removal of Boneseed, please telephone Kay Bailey on 0456 853 445 at Tamar NRM as she would like to hear from you.

Kay will take your details and make contact closer to the Blitz Week, when Tamar NRM have details of areas that have been identified as requiring Boneseed removal and discuss a location where you would be happy to help with other community members.

**TAMAR VALLEY**  
Wood Strategy Working Group

**Tamar NRM**

# BONESEED BLITZ WEEK

**27th September - 4th October, 2020**

**Help control Boneseed in the Tamar Valley!**

- Remove Boneseed from your property
- Organise a group of people during Boneseed Blitz Week
- Report any sightings

Boneseed eradication activities can be fitted around the working bee days of Landcare, Friends Groups, Farmer Groups, in fact any community group can participate at a time that suits them . . . and Tamar NRM will assist with free loan equipment including dabbers and loppers. Training provided for those that need it and groups can target Boneseed either side of the designated "Boneseed Blitz" week as this weed begins flowering and is readily identifiable from July onwards.

**Tamar NRM - Phone 6323 3310**

Further control information available from [DPIPWE website](#) or [Tamar Weeds Strategy](#)

Boneseed is an invasive weed of national significance. It invades natural areas and out competes native plants. It can invade the understorey of bushland and reduces biodiversity and become a fire hazard.

Tasmanian Government  
Website: [www.tamarnrm.com.au](http://www.tamarnrm.com.au) [www.facebook.com/TamarNRM15](https://www.facebook.com/TamarNRM15)

## 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 \$4.00. Sunday parking free.
- Provide your own food and drinks for the outing and wear/take clothing/footwear suitable for all weather types.
- 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, Phil Brumby on 0407 664 554 or [bookings@lfnc.org.au](mailto:bookings@lfnc.org.au) regarding availability and keys.

**Field Centre Phone Number:** (03) 6399 3361

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

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

**Facebook site:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/527797787360157/>

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