

THE LAUNCESTON NATURALIST

Volume LIV No.6 August / September 2021

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 : Ms Bernadette Willey, 0487 755 085
Hon. Treasurer : Mrs Karen Manning, 0363 442 277

Meetings 1st Tuesday of month, February-December (except Jul & Aug) at Scotch-Oakburn College, Senior Campus, Penquite Rd Newstead

Program:

October

Tuesday 5

Meeting - Speaker: Brian O'Byrne, *Walking the Abels*

Sunday 17

Annual General Meeting at John Skemp field Centre (more details page 2)

Fri 22 to Sun 24

Weekend at Mt Cameron Field Study Centre (more details page 2 & 3)

November

Tuesday 2

John Skemp Memorial Lecture - Guest Speaker: Todd Dudley, *The decade of ecosystems restoration*

Fri 5 to Sun 7

Field Work – Property south of Ross (more details page 3)

Sunday 7

Community volunteering: "Catch it in the Catchment" Club site at Kings Meadows Rivulet, meet at 9.30am behind Kings Meadows Hotel (more details page 3)

Saturday 27

Skemps Day - Members Day

December

Tuesday 7

Members Night, *The Year That Was*

Saturday 11

Skemps Day – Members Christmas get-together

Saturday 18

Field Trip – Arthurs Lake/Plateau for Wildflowers with APST members

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

AGM information

The 2021 Annual General Meeting of the Launceston Field Naturalists Club will be held at the John Skemp Field Centre, Myrtle Bank, on Sunday 17th October, commencing at 11am. The purpose of this meeting is to present reports, elect office bearers and committee nominations for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and x3 Committee members, and confirm the annual subscription.

Members are reminded that they should not attend the AGM if they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID19, such as a runny nose, persistent cough, shortness of breath, elevated temperature, or any other flue like symptoms. 28 members can be seated in the Centre maintaining the 2sq metre rule, except members of one household may sit together.

We do ask that you phone into the John Skemps Field Centre on 6399 3361 to advise your apology.

The Committee will provide cold meats and salads, and hot drinks. It would be appreciated if members could bring along cakes, slices or desserts to share following our lunch.

Year That Was 2021 – send info to newsletter@lfnc.org.au

I would be pleased to receive images that you would be willing to share from field trips and Skemps days to include in the presentation for 2021 at the last general meeting of the year in December. Members who provide images will be acknowledged. Thanks in advance. Karen

Weekend Excursion – Fri 22 to Sun 24 October - Mt Cameron Field Study Centre

The centre will be available to us from Friday night. Cost to stay each night is \$25 per person in the two bunk rooms. Mike Douglas will be leading us on excursions from the centre. Please let us know who will be attending though booking is not essential. Please also let me know of any special interests for the area that you would like to cover.

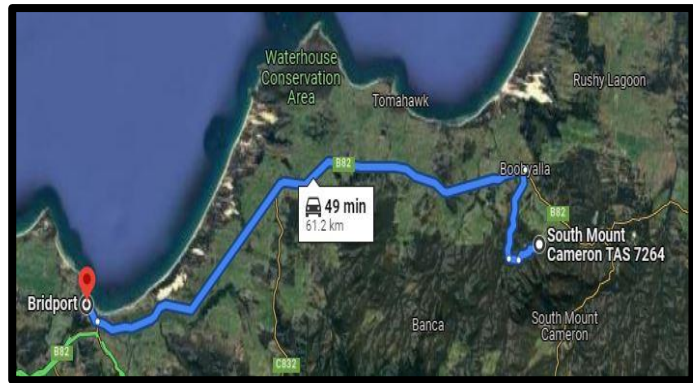
We will need to bring our own bedding and pillows, as they only provide mattresses. Bring along any food and drinks you require for the weekend as there are no corner shops in the immediate area.

Members who wish to come only for the walk on Saturday will need to allow a travel time of approximately 2 hours from Launceston to meet up at the field centre by 10:00 am for a walk starting at 10:30 on the Whale Rock track. Mike Douglas UTAS lecturer and field naturalist will lead us on the walk in granite country as we take in the botany and the geomorphology of the area near to the Mt Cameron Field Centre. On Saturday night we can share a meal-time and perhaps some photos, film or impromptu talks. We are hoping that Scottsdale locals Craig and Debbie Searle can join us on Sunday morning; Craig will talk to us about the arrangements for off grid services at the Centre and Debbie will show us the local fauna, orchids and other plants that we expect to see in flower at that time. If more details required, contact Helen via email at program@lfnc.org.au

Tom Treloggen has provided the following direction to the Mt Cameron Field Study Centre, which he was given by the North Eastern Field Naturalists Club. Tom said he had no problem getting to the destination with these directions.

From Bridport, travel towards Gladstone on the Waterhouse Road. About half an hour along that road the surface changes to gravel, coinciding with the Banca Road junction. **Do not turn** down this road, continue on towards Gladstone.

After **8.5km** of gravel road, turn right onto the **Old Port Road**. This road is not sign posted but there may be temporary signs attached to the fence saying 'Field Study Centre'. Travel **6.9km** along this road **without** turning off. You will come to a Y junction. Turn left at that point and travel a further 3.6 km to the boom gates. Once through the boom gates, it is a further **2 km** to the Field Study Centre.



Field Work Opportunity - Fri 5 to Sun 7 November – Property south of Ross

Kerry Bridle has notified us of an upcoming BioBlitz to be held at a property south east of Ross, over the weekend 5-7th November. We are invited to attend on any one or all of the days. Shearers' quarters and camping will be available for accommodation. This is an exciting opportunity to have a close look over some new territory and our field naturalist's skills will be invaluable in the task. Email notice of your interest by 15th Oct to kerrybridle22@gmail.com

Community Clean Up Event - Sunday 7 November - Catch it in the Catchment

The Club has again registered to support this worthwhile activity run by Tamar Natural Resource Management. The club's cleanup site is along the Kings Meadows Rivulet. Those interested should meet in the carpark behind Kings Meadows Hotel for a 9.30am start.

We will provide you with a hi-vis vest, collection bags and a pick-up stick if required. Please bring your own waterproof gloves, and be sun safe with a hat and sun-screen.

If you would like further information, please contact Claire Manning 0400 969 694 AH

Skemps Report – August to September 2021

Thanks to Andrew, Bernadette, Caitlin, Jeff, Karen, Prue, Rob many of the usual tasks have been completed, including replacing the gas bottle, cutting, splitting and moving of firewood, updating library list, replacing consumable in the Centre, gathering of kindling, cleaning of Centre, a check of the Assets List for the annual Audit, sharpening of the chainsaw, removing foxglove seedlings and thistle, clearing of many of the nature trails and raking the driveway (more than once due to the number of windy days over this period). Unusual tasks include clearing the accumulated debris off the roof of the water tank shed, further removal of Federation Corridor fencing materials, making more steps on the Loop track, poisoning of grass and slashing of bracken in sites chosen for the Acacia planting, installation of a wire fence with farm gate around the Telstra pillar near the driveway, plug holes (drain) in bunkrooms and another in the NW corner ceiling area of the main room and cover floor of woodshed with corrugated iron to better preserve the firewood.



I gave up on repairs to a leaking tap near the Federation Corridor and just blocked off the outlet though I had more success repairing the vacuum cleaner and it was

used soon after in the Centre. There was a break in at the poison shed with the bolt damaged and the lock taken, and although an attempt to enter the barn was unsuccessful, the lock was damaged. I was able to repair the barn lock and found a suitable bolt for the poison shed and installed it. Nothing appears to have been stolen and a 'DANGER' sign has been added to warn of the hazardous chemicals kept there. After much work by Jeff and I, we gave up trying to rescue a bird trapped in the wall of the northern small bedroom and left the sheeting off to reduce the chance of it smelling.

Karen has led a major task of tidying up at the back of the Centre, around the container shed and the area behind the barn and these places are looking much better with useful materials better stored for the future.



Rob does an amazing job splitting wood and he also helped to dig the extra holes ready for our Acacia planting. He pointed out that these needed to be either deeper or the bottoms



loosened to help the plants take root and then started the task with the crow bar, including working on the holes already dug by Prue and others on a Skemps Day. Two of these group plantings are fenced off with a single fence around the 3 trees and a farm gate installed. A farm gate consists of having the last section of the fence loose with a wooden stake on the loose end to keep it straight. This section of the fence can be quickly opened or closed to allow easy access.



A wattle growing too close to the Centre was removed and we all pitched in for the cleanup which included carting away the rubbish or cutting it into firewood. The rubbish from this tree and many other clean ups have been placed in a number of piles around the property and these were recently burnt before fire restrictions were expected.

On August 10th, we hosted a group of mostly overseas students from UTAS doing volunteer duty. Led by Bernadette, four went with their supervisor Vanessa, as well as Caitlin and Karen to clear the Tyre Track of foxglove, while Jeff and I took four to Bob's

Bog to remove tree guards. Vanessa told us that many of the students had grown up in big cities and had never experienced being in the bush before, so the leeches, fungi and ferns were all new to them. Thanks to Vanessa we may have formed a new partnership and she kindly gave us the pliers purchased for this volunteer day.

If you can help on future Tuesdays, please contact me.

Noel Manning

New Members

A big welcome to new members Monique Case, Fay Goold, Sarah Trousdale and Andrew Smith. We look forward to you attending our meetings, field trips and Skemp days.

Field Trip – Sunday August 1 – Beachcombing at East Beach, Low Head

On a cool, windy day members arrived at East Beach over a 60 minute period. Early arrivals walked to the rocky area behind the golf course where we have been conducting rockpool surveys for a couple of years. With a low tide it was easy to move about on the flat rocky area and the larger rocks. It was noted that the survey area did not have much in the way of seashore life in it though we did see Neptune's necklace, nerites, green algae and red anemones.

Joining later arrivals, we all walked along the high tide line which in places was a foot or more deep with sea grasses and other marine life following a very high tide or storm event. Here we found many varieties of marine plant life, sea squirts, anemone shells and cuttlefish, and sea sponges of many shapes, colour and sizes. We also found pieces of glass of differing colours smoothed to an opaque stone like shape from many years tumbling in the ocean.

We walked as far as Cimitiere Creek which was flowing out over the sea shore and was too deep to cross. This was unusual as in previous visits the mouth of the creek was blocked by a sandbar and we could easily cross and walk further on.

We ate lunch in the sand dunes by the creek out of the wind before heading back along the beach noting the progressive changes in rock size. We also picked up rubbish which filled a large bag. A very enjoyable day in the sun.



Noel, Prue & Lottie relaxing after lunch



Sea grass and sea sponge



Kelp and *Caulerpa* sp



Sea squirt

Field Trip – Saturday August 7 – GPS and Apps Instruction – Trevallyn Reserve

Thank you to Roy Skabo for organising this interesting field trip at the Hoo Hoo Hut in the Trevallyn Reserve and for arranging our instructor David Waters. David showed us how to use GPS and map programs on our smart phones for navigation. In preparation for the exercise we downloaded Avenza Maps and also a map of the area purchased from the appropriate App store.

He then handed out prepared sets of instructions with a map then showed us how to use these to navigate to a given point. Each individual or pair then had to locate an object planted earlier by David. This was not necessarily easy and I think he had to assist nearly everyone with the task. Later he showed us how to use our smart phone to track where we were walking and to mark waypoints on the map. This would enable the user to retrace the journey or return to a marked point. We all found the later exercise reasonably easy to do.

With the exercise finished before lunch we headed off to eat before going home. We also decided to meet again for a follow up to the exercise.

We met the following week at the Skabo residence to do the paper work for the exercise, moving the gained data to LISTmap. This was done with limited success due to download limitations on the night though still an interesting and informative exercise and I am sure that follow up exercises will see us all proficient in the use of these apps. Noel Manning

Field Trip – Saturday August 14 – Trevallyn Reserve – Plants

Members met and carpoled for the drive from the Trevallyn side of the Cataract Gorge Reserve to Dennison Grove in West Launceston, where our walk was to commence. Heading down from the carpark, the walkway was in very good condition considering the rain from the previous weeks. We zig-zagged down the side of the gully above the river coming out on the Duck Reach Trail at a large viewing platform where we could see the raging waters flowing down the South Esk River.

It was here that Roy explained that there were about 30 list threatened species of plants in the Cataract Gorge and of these, eight species were regularly inundated during flood events. He noted that these plants continued to be found in the river bed and had already endured eight floods this year, which had been particularly wet.

We walked slowly along the Duck Reach Trail towards the First Basin where Prue heard an Olive whistler and a Fantail Cuckoo, and Fairy wrens could be seen flitting from tree to tree. The walkway was very muddy in patches and had a lot of foot traffic, possibly due to it being one of the few sunny days this week.

We also noted passionfruit vines growing over the native plants, lone boneseed plants (1 in flower) with only one accessible and removed, foxglove (removed), deadly nightshade and a few thistle. There were mistletoe (a parasitic growth spread by seed) on various bushes and other plants with a fasciation which can occur on any plant and in this case, was characterised by a change in the stem. Roy pointed out the difference between silver (*Acacia dealbata* with single raised gland at base of each pinnae pair) and black wattle (*A. mearnsii* with two glands occurring irregularly between each pinnae pair) with Noel eventually finding a black wattle.

At the suspension bridge we crossed to the other side and walked down the approach to the walkway across the First Basin which was underwater. Here Roy pointed out *Epacris exserta* and *Micranthemum hexandrum* which were both in flower.

We returned to the carpark on the Trevallyn side and carpooled back to West Launceston to collect the other vehicles. The five members who stayed on to have their lunch saw a White-bellied sea-eagle and a Brown falcon soaring the thermals overhead.

An enjoyable day out in the sunshine. Thanks must go to Roy Skabo who pointed out and told us more about some of the plants on the way. Karen Manning

Flora:- **Acacia dealbata*, silver wattle; *Acacia mearnsii*, black wattle; *Acacia melanoxylon*, blackwood; *Acacia mucronata*, caterpillar wattle; *Allocasuarina verticillata*, drooping sheoak; *Astroloma humifusum*, native cranberry; *Bedfordia salicina*, Tasmanian blanket leaf; *Beyeria viscosa*, pinkwood; *Bossiaea prostrata*, creeping bossiaea; *Bulbine bulbosa*, bulbine lily; *Bursaria spinosa*, prickly box; *Cassinia aculeata*, dollybush; *Cassytha melantha*, large dodder-laurel; *Chrysocephalum* sp., everlasting daisy; **Clematis aristata*, mountain clematis; *Coprosma quadrifida*, native currant; **Correa reflexa*, common correa; *Dodonaea viscosa*, hophbush; **Epacris exserta*, south esk heath; *Exocarpos cupressiformis*, common native-cherry; *Gonocarpus* sp., raspwort; *Hakea microcarpa*, needle bush; *Hibbertia riparia*, erect guinea flower; *Linum marginale*, wild flax; *Lomatia tinctoria*, guitar plant; **Micrantheum hexandrum*, river trident bush; *Notelaea ligustrina*, native olive; *Olearia phlogopappa*, dusty daisybush; *Oxalis perennans*, native oxalis; *Ozothamnus* sp., everlasting bush; *Pelargonium australe*, southern storksbill; *Pomaderris apetala*, common dogwood; *Prostanthera lasianthos*, Christmas mintbush; *Prostanthera rotundifolia*, roundleaf mintbush; *Spyridium ulicinum*, scented dusty miller; **Stackhousia monogyna*, forest candles *= in flower

Birds:- *Cacomantis flabelliformis*, fan-tailed cuckoo; *Falco berigora*, brown falcon; *Haliaeetus leucogaster*, white bellied sea-eagle; *Malurus cyaneus*, superb fairy-wren; *Pachycephala olivacea*, olive whistler

Fauna:- *Thylogale billardierii*, Tasmanian pademelon

Fern: - *Adiantum aethiopicum*, common maidenhair; *Asplenium flabellifolium*, necklace fern; *Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia*, resurrection fern

Grass:- *Themeda triandra*, kangaroo grass; *Dianella revoluta*, spreading flax-lily; *Lepidosperma* sp., sword-sedge; *Lomandra longifolia*, sagg; *Pteridium esculentum*, austral bracken



Roy, Fay and Jeff examining a *Beyeria viscosa*, pinkwood



Correa reflexa, common correa



Stackhousia monogyna, forest candle



Trametes versicolor

Workshop – Saturday August 21 – Eucalypt ID

This workshop was run by Threatened Plants Tasmania (TPT) for members of the public who were interested in identifying Eucalypts, with seven members from the club participating. Our instructor, Mark Wapstra, started with a PowerPoint presentation which covered many of the aspects to be considered when making an identification, and also discussed the problems due to the lack of bud, fruits or juvenile leaves which may make decisions almost impossible.

We then set up in groups of 4 – 6 and using the Eucalyptus key provided worked through the steps to identify Mark's samples, which were either pressed or fresh specimens. We had to keep in mind some anomalies provided in the information earlier which could also help us through the key.

Our group managed to identify all the samples that we collected with the last sample being the most difficult. Following lunch we visited the native garden at the Windsor Centre and had a leisurely stroll around the garden testing our new skills to identify the eucalypts growing there.



Mark Wapstra working participants through the key

Skemps Day – Sunday August 29

Today we started preparing areas of ground for the planting of wattles to be grown in the Acacia Walk in memory of Life Member, Marion Simmons. The area to be planted runs down the paddock that you can see from the Centre's kitchen window, between the forest on the right and the grassland area on the left, with the first planting to be done later next month.



We also noted the removal of trees on the hill to the left of the property, where they are being harvested by Forico. When the hill was last logged in 2002, wind caused quite a bit of damage on the property. Their removal meant the wind gusts hit Skemps, rather than being broken up by the trees and flowing over the property. It will be interesting to see how this affects us in the next few months.

Noel, Jeff and Prue turning the first sods

Meeting – Tuesday September 7 – Guest speaker – Steve Broadbent - Galapagos Birds – Managing invasive rodent pests to protect native wildlife

Prue introduced Steve Broadbent and his talk on managing invasive rodent pests to protect native wildlife.

Steve started by saying that he was a public health entomologist and has also looked at rodents. While rodents are usually controlled with rodenticide he would talk about alternatives and going to the Galapagos Islands to train people to eradicate rodents with traps. He said that while it was wonderful to visit such impressive places he also got to see what he called the backside of national parks. The Galapagos is a haven for wildlife and wildlife tourism though he learnt that there are 700 invasive plant species as well as donkeys, horses, goats, rabbits, dogs, cats, pigs, cows, sheep, poultry, rats, mice, ants and cockroaches with rodents having the greatest impact.

Steve told us that due to geographical isolation islands had 20% of unique plants and animals while being only 5% of the world's land mass, have 50% of the world's endangered species and 80% of recent extinctions have occurred on islands. Rodents have accounted for 40% of extinctions and mice have invaded over 50 islands while rats are pests on 466 islands.

From graphs, by the group Island Conservation, we learnt that over 70% of seabird extinctions were caused by invasive species as well as over 50% of seabird endangerment. This makes them a serious problem in these environments and much in need of attention and traditionally the eradication method is second generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGAR).

Steve told us of the advantages of SGARs, such as Brodifacoum, including low chance of bait shyness where an acute poison causes quick death and the animals learn not to take the bait. First generation rodenticides have a lower level of toxicity though these baits need to be put out more often over longer periods of time and this is more costly. The success of SGARs though comes at a cost to wildlife.

Unlike over the counter baits the SGARs break down after around 14 days to reduce the impact on wildlife. As well the pellets are dyed blue or green as these colours are less attractive to non-target species.

The first island wide eradication program for rats and mice was on Maria Island, NZ, between 1959 and 1961 to save the white-faced storm petrel.

Closer to home one of the biggest eradication programs was on the 12,900 hectares of Macquarie Island. At the time this was the largest such project in the world and was done over seven years with the usual amazingly fast recolonization of the bird life. The largest rodent eradication on an inhabited island occurred on the 1,455 hectares of Lord Howe Island, ridding it of an estimated 150,000 rats and 210,000 mice.

Staff from Sydney's Taronga Zoo captured the local birds considered most at risk from the eradication program, the native wood hens and currawongs, which were released after the two to three week period of the program. The eradication was successful though two rats were found earlier in the year and the program has been restarted led by a Tasmanian.

Even closer to home rats were eliminated from George Rocks off the north east coast of Tasmania using the traps Steve would refer to later. White-faced storm-petrels and the common diving petrel were affected by the rodents on these rocks. Dogs confirmed the eradication had been successful and again the birds have returned.

The largest eradication in the world was on South Georgia, involving over 100,000 hectares, and after three years the island is considered rodent free showing that it can be done on a large scale.

Rodenticides are an issue due to deaths amongst non-target species. Primary deaths are where non target species eat the bait and secondary deaths are a bigger issue as the non-target species eat the dead rodent. Steve is a member of a working party looking at how to better control the use of SGARs and to keep them off the super market shelves. He considers that public use would be far more a problem than agricultural and professional use.

Rodenticides should be a last resource in a rodent elimination program which should start with proofing, the elimination of food and water, removal of harbourage as well as trapping and only when that fails should the rodenticides be introduced. The UK and Switzerland have introduced legislation to ban the use of inhumane practices such as glue boards and this is being considered for Australia.

Steve took us through the circuitous route to get to the Galapagos Islands before giving us a description stating first that there are 18 main islands and 4 small ones with five population centres. It was made a national park in 1959 with an estimated population of 1,000 to 2,000 at the time. By 1972 the population was 3,488, around 15,000 in the 1980s and 25,124 in the 2010 census. It is growing at what Steve described as an unsustainable 8% per annum with an estimated 35,000 to 40,000 these days. Before the permanent populations Steve described the only inhabitants as pirates and whalers.

Steve worked on the main island of Santa Cruz and he started this part of his talk by telling us of the endangered birds and animals. The ground nesting long-winged Galapagos petrel is critically endangered as it is exposed to rodents which are also a secondary threat to the critically endangered mangrove finch, one of the rarest birds in the world. The main threat is an introduced parasitic fly, *Phlornis downsi*, which sucks the blood from nestlings. The remaining 100 individuals, including only 20 breeding pairs, are restricted to two pristine mangrove swamps of just 32 ha and even here their favoured black mangrove trees are in decline.

The Floreana mockingbird is also critically endangered and where once it was widespread it is restricted to two tiny off-shore islands of about 2.5 ha. It was the first mockingbird described by Charles Darwin and he did his early studies on the four species of mockingbirds of the Galapagos Islands. Darwin also identified 13 species of finch here and another on the Cocos Islands.

Steve mentioned in particular the Galapagos Island of Baltra, a former WWII United States Army Airforce base. The Americans just left leaving behind problems in the form of cats and dogs. Initially the biggest problem was the dogs so these were eliminated first. This created a problem with the cats and when these were dealt with, they had an even more serious problem with rats. Baltra had an inhospitable environment with its thorny bushes, sharp volcanic rocks and a dry climate while providing good conditions for rodents. He also noted that the juvenile Galapagos tortoise could be caught by the traps deployed for the rodents.

On the Galapagos Islands it is the birds most in need of protection, especially the finches made famous by Darwin in his book. These are not really finches they are tanagers, probably descendent from grassquits of South America, which diversified and adapted to different environments. They famously evolved and became different species with individual beaks suited to different food types and images introduced us to some of these finches.

Rodenticide proved to be a problem on the Galapagos Islands as it was not dispersing in the environment after a few weeks. Instead it was found in the lava up to 12 months later, it was found in cockroaches as well and a number of lava herons had died as a result of the baiting program.

The talk moved on to the alternative, the Goodnature E2 rodent trap. The trap is a light, <600 grams, strong, gas powered trap which can deliver 24 humane kills per CO2 cylinder and contains a toxin free natural rodent lure. We saw that dead rodents near the trap do not deter other rodents and a brown falcon took a dead rat near a trap and we knew it would not be harmed. During question time we found out that an inbuilt counter shows the number of times the device had fired. Before the traps are set bits of peanut butter coated plastic are deployed to gauge the number of rodents in an area and gnaw marks can indicate a species or differentiate between rats and mice.

Steve told us that New Zealand is aiming to be feral free by 2050 which he described as maybe an unachievable target, but good on them for trying. He told us you do not have to think about non target species in New Zealand as in his words '...basically if it's a mammal and it doesn't fly it shouldn't be there'. The three native mammals are bats and introduced species include possums, cats, hedgehogs, weasels and martins.

The first rat eradication was on Native Island, off Stewart Island at the southern tip of New Zealand with numbers halved within two months and eradication completed after one year showing the success of a traps only program. The islands are only 60 metres apart so reintroduction can occur by rats swimming to the island as well as coming in on boats with tourists. Steve described the beauty of traps is that these can be left armed and ready if a rat turns up and only need to be checked every three to six months, whereas rodenticide distribution needs planning.

The talk moved on to the Sea Turtle Research Unit (SEATRU) on Pulau Redang off the east coast of Malaysia where the rats eat the turtle eggs deposited on the beach. Traps were used here although this was a threat to a native squirrel. Rats are mainly nocturnal while the squirrel is diurnal so using more labour the traps were only deployed at night.

Steve said it was much more of a challenge in Australia as we have so many small native rodents we are trying to save. There has been some success on George Rocks of NE Tasmania controlling rats and in the swift parrot areas of southern Tasmania controlling the predatory sugar gliders.

The main part of the presentation finished with images from the Galapagos Islands of many other birds not seen earlier, as well as fur seals, tortoise and, land and marine iguana and the comment that these had evolved over thousands of years with only the Galapagos hawk as a threat. Native birds struggled with rodents on the islands and while eggs and nestlings suffer the

most, the adult frigate bird has problems as well with the large wings, which allow such powerful flight, making it ungainly on land.

Steve concluded his talk by telling us of the conservative nature of the eco-tourism on the islands followed by member's questions answered, before Prue thanked him and led the acclamation.

Noel Manning

Field Trip – Sunday 19 September – Badger Head

Although the weather was predicted as wet and windy, Prue, Noel and I met at Badger Head to have a look at the coastal flowering. We didn't have to roam too far from the carpark before we saw the yellow flowers of the coastal wattle and white flowers of the *Leucopogon australis*. There was a light sprinkle of rain on and off, as we walked along a section of the coastal track.

We saw the following in flower - prickly moses, blue lovecreeper, hop native-primrose, slender velvetbush, spike beardheath, coastal paperbark, yellow dogwood, heartleaf bushpea, silky guineaflower, forest candles and bower spinach, before heading back to the carpark and down to the beach.

Walking along we noticed a local who had picked up 3 baby ducklings. The lady had been watching the ducklings whose mother had left them sometime earlier and had not returned. She was concerned as the ducklings were searching for their mother and had wandered away from where she had left them.

The waves were surging up onto the beach and washing the sand from around the pebbles and rocks, leaving them uncovered and many seaweeds were high amongst the rocks. The rain started heavy again so we made for our vehicles and called it a day.



Melaleuca ericifolia, coast paperbark



Acacia verticillata, prickly moses

Plants noted:

Ferns:- *Adiantum aethiopicum*, common maidenhair; *Pteridium esculentum*, bracken fern;

Flora:- *Acacia longifolia* ssp. *sophorae*, coast wattle; *Acacia verticillata* ssp. *verticillata*, prickly moses; *Acaena novae-zelandiae*, common buzzy; *Allocasuarina verticillata*, drooping sheoak; *Bursaria spinosa*, prickly box; *Carpobrotus rossii*, native pigface; *Cassytha glabella*, slender dodderlaurel; *Comesperma volubile*, blue lovecreeper; *Dianella revoluta*, spreading flaxlily;

Dichondra repens, kidneyweed; *Eucalypt* sp., gum; *Gonocarpus tetragynus*, common raspwort; *Gonocarpus teucroides*, forest raspwort; *Goodenia ovata*, hop native-primrose; *Hibbertia sericea*, silky guineaflower; *Hypericum gramineum*, small St. Johns-wort; *Lasiopetalum baueri*, slender velvetbush; *Leptospermum scoparium*, common teatree; *Leucopogon australis*, spike beardheath; *Melaleuca ericifolia*, coast paperbark; *Pomaderris elliptica*, yellow dogwood; *Pomaderris oraria*, bassian dogwood; *Pultenaea daphnoides*, heartleaf bushpea; *Rhagodia candolleana*, coastal saltbush; *Stackhousia monogyna*, forest candles; *Tetragonia implexicoma*, bower spinach.

Grasses & Rushes:- *Lomandra longifolia*, sagg; *Distichlis distichophylla*, Australian saltgrass

Moss:- *Thuidiopsis furfurosa*

Birds:- *Falco berigora*, brown falcon, *Larus novaehollandiae*, silver gull; *Larus pacificus*, pacific gull; 3 little baby ducks

Skemps Day – Saturday September 25 – Members Day (Acacia planting)

Members arrived today to start planting in the Acacia walk. With holes dug and areas already prepared during previous weeks, we had the easy task of placing the seedlings in the ground. Buckets of water were bought in to thoroughly wet and settle the soil around the roots. Cages were placed around each seedling and secured with stakes. During the afternoon, we made a single barrier around one group of plants which has an opening to enable access for weeding around the plants when necessary. The other groups of plants will also have this type of barrier installed. We are also intending to mulch the removed soil and improve it with leaves and shredded bark, and place it around the plants.



We look forward to watching them grow and adding further plants as they become available. Thank you to members that helped on the day.



Above - Roy and Andrew hammering in stakes

Left - Jeff, Andrew, Noel, Prue, Roy, Karen, Tina

Photographs Tom McGlynn

Forty South

Prue Wright recently read an interesting article by Keith Corbett in the Spring edition of *Forty South* which she thought would be of interest to members.

Keith had written the article after reading the book *The Wood for the Trees: The Long View of Nature From a Small Wood* by one of his favourite authors Richard Fortey, an eminent British geologist and TV presenter.

Fortey had purchased a small block in the Chiltern Hills, west of London and the article by Keith *Bush blocks: English style and Tasmanian style*, compares his 120 hectare bush block near Cradle Mountain to Fortey's in London.

A Guide to Flowers & Plants of Tasmania, 5th Edn

This guide would make a nice Christmas gift for a family member or friend. The Treasurer has a few brand new copies to sell at \$30 each, in bookstores they sell for \$35 each. They will be available at the AGM and the December meeting, if they are not sold beforehand.

Additional Information

Club Outings:

- Until further notice, members should make their own travel arrangements to participate in club outings, contact the Program Manager at the email address below, if you required further details.
- 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 regarding availability and keys.

Field Centre Phone Number: (03) 6399 3361

Postal Address: 23 Skemps Road, Myrtle Bank 7259

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

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

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