

THE LAUNCESTON NATURALIST

Volume LV No.1 October/November 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 : Jeff Campbell, 0432 470 311
Hon. Secretary : Noel Manning, 0458 030 767
Hon. Treasurer : Karen Manning, 0419 596 261

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

Program:

December

Tuesday 7

Club night - *The Year That Was* and social evening

Saturday 11

Skemps Day – Members Christmas get-together

Saturday 18

Field Trip – Arthurs Lake/Plateau for Wildflowers with APST members
(More details page 13)

January

Sunday 30

Field Trip – East Beach at Low Head for rock pools. (More details page 13)

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

Skemps Report:

Thanks to Andrew, Bernadette, Brian, Caitlin, Grant, Jeff, Karen, Rob and Tom much has been achieved at Skemps over the past two months. The usual dropping of spars, cutting, splitting, moving and stacking of fire wood and cleaning around the Centre were done. While weeding included the removal of foxglove, Spanish heath, thistle and broom on the road above the Federation Corridor, on Targa Hill Road near the bottom of Skemps, various places on the property and particularly below the trailer shed.

A major cleanup was done at the back of the barn to make it tidier and to better protect and make accessible the building materials stored there. Spring cleaning started early in the Centre as a bird was trapped inside and made a mess while cobwebs were removed on the outside. Mulch sourced by Prue was put around the recently planted acacias and these have been regularly watered.

The chainsaw received a well-deserved new chain and the dead lock on the front door was adjusted as it was close to jamming. The door on the trailer shed was repaired after the lock appeared to have been broken off leaving the door both unsecured and rather weak and dilapidated.

New member Andrew is a great addition to our crew. Having noticed that something was amiss in the barn he found the cistern there was jammed and leaking, a simple thing though it was causing a serious loss of water and needed attention especially with the approaching dry season. He has also looked at the failing battery powered lighting in the barn and thinks it should be simple and cheap to fix.

The grass has finally grown to a length where we recently had to mow along the driveway and paths around the paddocks.

A Telstra technician attended the property to look at a phone line pillar and a phone line pit which both appeared to be damaged. He looked at these issues, amused us with stories of snakes on the job and tested the mobile signal near the property. He noted the signal was irregular and not reliable and suggested that a booster system could be installed privately in the Field Centre for around \$1,500.

Noel Manning

October Meeting – Tuesday October 5 - Brian O'Byrne the Abels

Prue introduced new member Brian O'Byrne and his talk on the Abels, Tasmania's 158 peaks over 1,100 metres. Brian started his talk by telling us of the inspiration for both the list and their name.

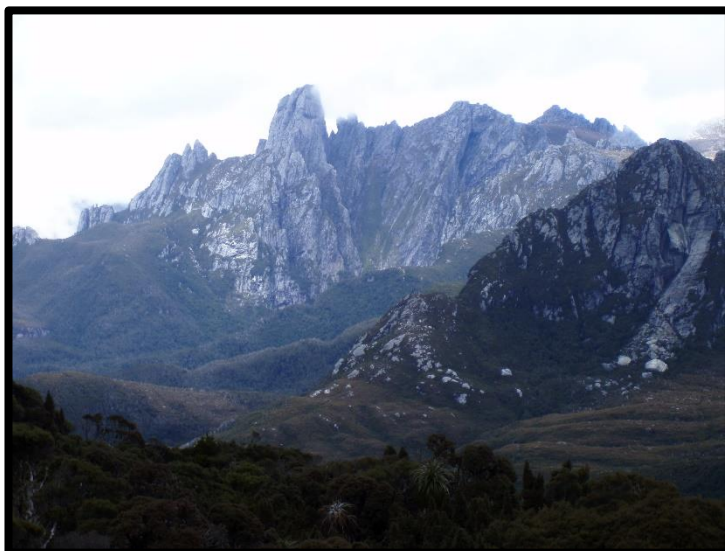
In 1891 Sir Hugh Munro had compiled a list of the peaks of Scotland over 3,000 feet (914.4 metres) and around 3,000 people have climbed all 283 of these. Having seen the list on a visit to Scotland Bill Wilkinson, past president of the Launceston Walking Club, was inspired to make a similar list of the mountains of Tasmania. There being far too many peaks in Tasmania over even 1,000 metres, Bill decided to include only those over 1,100 metres with a drop of at least 150 metres before the next prominence. Considering the Tasmans as a name for these mountains he eventually settled on the Abels and his first list came out in 1994. We were shown the two books on these mountains with volume 1 coming out in 1994 featuring those in the north, east and south, while volume 2 came out in 2011 featuring mostly peaks in the south west and Cradle Mountain Lake St Clair. Volume 1 was updated in 2016 and volume 2 is due soon.

Brian showed us a full list of the mountains telling us that there are only 20 people who have climbed all the Abels. Brian has climbed all the Abels adding his last, Mount Tor, in 2015 after snow had caused him to abandon two earlier attempts. There are many working to get on this list

with Brian joking that there are couples in hot competition with each other to become an Abelist first.

The impressive slide show started with his second conquest, Mount Ossa, the highest peak in Tasmania at 1,614 metres. It is our only mountain over 1,600 metres with another six over 1,500 metres and the remaining 150 below 1,500 metres. The early photos were of the iconic peaks of Tasmania and over the this part of the slideshow we saw Ossa, Legges Tor (second highest at 1575), Saddleback, Victoria, Albert, Barn Bluff (fourth highest at 1,549), Pelion West (third highest and a difficult climb), Cradle Mountain (fifth highest at 1,545), Little Horn, Stacks Bluff (sixth highest peak), Ben Nevis (one of the many day trip Abels in the north), Arthur, Barrow, Quamby Bluff, Western Bluff and Ironstone.

Next up was Federation Peak in what Brian described as his favourite part of Tasmania (image by Brian), and the most challenging for climbers and walkers, the South West. He described Federation Peak as Australia's most iconic mountain, the ultimate peak for climbers who come from all over Australia and beyond. It was first climbed in 1949 by John Béchervaise and party and the next person to climb it was a solo by Keith Lancaster, from the Launceston Walking Club, using the north face. During question time it was noted that this peak was first climbed only four years before Everest was conquered.



The pictures of peaks continued with Frenchmans Cap, Philips Peak (with impressive rainbow), Eldon Bluff, Eldon Peak, Murchison, High Dome, Pyramid, Goulds Sugarloaf, Black Bluff and Mount Tor, Brian's last Abel.

The mountain slideshow finished with Rogoona, Campbell, Oakleigh, Hyperion, Cathedral Rock, The Guardians, Horizontal Hill, Manfred, The Acropolis, Perrins Bluff, Rufus, Owen, Jukes (Brian's first Abel climbed in 1968), Western Arthurs comprising Sirius, Orion, Hayes, Capricorn and Pegasus (the last two are not Abels), The Spires, Innes High Rocky, Weld, Anne, La Perouse, Pindars Peak, Bobs and Mount Field.

This presentation was not just about mountain vistas as we were treated to pictures of the intrepid climbers as well as snow, ice, tents in remote locations, lakes, trigonometric cairns, huts, spider webs, plants, fungi and animals seen along the way. We learnt that James Sprent (building cairns between 1833 and 1855) and Wentworth Hardy (building cairns during the 1880s) had built substantial trigonometric cairns throughout Tasmania. Sprent built cubed cairns 10 by 10 by 10 feet while Hardy built round ones 10 foot across and we saw images of some of them.

Plants included *Nothofagus gunnii*, *Richea scoparia* and *R. pandanifolia*, *Bellendena montana*, *Milligania densiflora*, *Prionotes cerinthoides*, *Pimelea sericea*, *Euphrasia diemenica* and *E. hookeri*, *Leptocarpus* sps, *Telopea truncata*, *Isophysis tasmanica*, *Blandfordia punicea*, *Dracophyllum milliganii*, *Drosera arcturi*, Coral fern, *Eucalyptus subcrenulata* and *Helichrysum milliganii*.

Aseroe rubra, *Clitopilus* sps, *Hygrocybe firma*, *H. graminicolor* and *H. mavis*, *Lentinellus* sps and *Mycena interrupta* represented the fungi.

For animals we saw images of a young wombat, tiger and white lipped snake, brown tree frog, honeyeater, honeyeater nest with eggs, mayfly or crane fly walking on water and black currawongs. One shot was an amazing close up of a wedge-tailed eagle flying past and another showed a spotted-tail quoll about to raid a tent.

After ten minutes of questions and answers Kay Bailey thanked Brian, presented him with a Club book and led the acclamation. Noel Manning



Brian being given a bottle of scotch by Dale Lisson for achieving his last Abel (permission given to use image)

Meeting – Sunday 17 October - AGM @ Skemps

Members attended the John Skemp Field Centre for a morning AGM meeting, which was to be followed by lunch and an afternoon walk. It was a warm morning so members were quite happy to sit outside for the meeting. Prue Wright gave her Presidents Report and thanked the outgoing committee for their support during the previous Club year. Karen Manning presented a Treasurers report. The election for office holders and ordinary committee members followed. A big thank you to Roy Skabo who acted as Returning Officer.

The following officers were elected: **President** Jeff Campbell; **Vice President** Helen Tait; **Secretary** Noel Manning; **Treasurer** Karen Manning; **ordinary members** elected were Tom Trelloggen and Bernadette Willey.

Nigel Forteach agreed to continue as **Patron** and Jeff Battersby as **Auditor**.



Roy collecting voting slips - image Tom McGlynn

Following our lunch of cold meats provided by the Club and salads provided by members, we took a walk along the paddock outside the kitchen window and looked at the growth of the *Acacia's* planted so far, continuing on to the Top Falls track seeing many fungi and orchids. There was a good flow of water through the creek. Continuing on, our return walk went past the old Scotch Oakburn adopt-a-patch site, which is now covered in large trees, mainly eucalypts and mountain peppers. At the roadway we noted large numbers of *Altica pagana*, the little blue metallic flea beetle, feeding on the *Acaena novae-zelandiae* which was growing in the middle of the road and unfortunately some foxglove and a sycamore tree near the adjacent property, which will be removed on the next working bee day.

Back at the Centre with our lunch walked off, we enjoyed a hot drink and afternoon tea before packing up and heading home. Karen Manning

Field Trip – Friday 22 to Sunday 24 October – Mt Cameron Field Study Centre

With the weather looking unfavourable the day for our long awaited trip to the Scottsdale School camp at Mt Cameron had finally arrived.

On Friday after a long time on the road, often unsure of which turn to take, we met Craig and Debbie Searle at the gate of the Centre around 3pm to be let in. Craig spent some time instructing Noel on how to operate the generators and the rest of the solar equipment. Five megawatts of solar panels keep their bank of expensive batteries charged up to run an inverter powering the Centre with 240 volts AC. This is enough to run lights in a quite large building and even a toaster and microwave in the kitchen. Three hot water services, a five burner stove and a large barbecue are run on gas. Except for a small demonstration run the generator was not needed. Even during the mostly overcast conditions of our weekend the sun kept the batteries at an acceptable level. Craig could keep an eye on the whole system with the internet and his smart phone. The Star Ship Enterprise had nothing on the control panels of this impressive equipment.

During this time Debbie took Jeff, Karl, Claire and I for a walk to show us the waterfall, pointing out the *Dockrillia striolata* subsp *striolata*, streaked rock orchid, growing on the granite rock faces and boulders. Debbie also showed us what they call the 'spa', a nice little spot in the top of the waterfall often used by visitors during the summer.

Debbie headed back while we slowly returned to the building noting the many plants in flower along the pathways. We completed our walks and general exploring close to the Centre with a light sprinkle of rain. After unpacking we went outside and found kindling for the fire and bought some logs up to the building to use that evening. Other members trickled in before it got dark and got settled before the heavy rain arrived after we headed to bed.



The following morning our guide for the day Mike Douglas arrived, as did other members. Our walk was to be on the Wedgetail Peak track, we started by looking at the orchids near the waterfall, before negotiating the creek higher up and heading along a bush track, which was mainly surrounded by *Kunzea*, *Eucalypts*, *Allocasuarina*, *Acacia* sps. and the lovely yellow *Pomaderris* (pictured below). At ground level we were seeing an array of colour from the smaller plants, orchids and fungi. We slowly made our way up to a huge boulder which had an overhang where we decided to have lunch. It was here that Prue found an interesting snail and slug.



Mike headed home before dark after discussing options for walks the next morning with us and members showing their appreciation for giving up his time to show us this interesting area.

Those remaining, shared biscuits and cheese while preparing their evening meal. Over drinks afterwards we were entertained with a few slide shows. Claire and I decided to head out into the dark to see what animals were about and were delighted to see an Eastern Quoll who sat on the path looking at us for a little while before casually moving on.

Next morning we cleaned and tidied the Centre, packed up and had a last look around the area before heading off. We called in to the Scottsdale gallery for coffee only to find there was a new exhibition opening and were unable to sit down to relax there before facing the twists and turns of the Sideling.

Karen Manning



Caryodes dufresnii, snail
Image K Manning



Helicarion cuvieri, semi-slug
Image K Manning

Flora - *Acacia genistifolia*, spreading wattle; *A. mucronata* sp., caterpillar wattle; *A. myrtifolia*, redstem wattle; *A. stricta*, hop wattle; *A. suaveolens*, sweet wattle; *A. terminalis*, sunshine wattle; *A. verticillata* sp., prickly moses; *Allocasuarina verticillata*, drooping sheoak; *Amperea xiphoclada*, broom spurge; *Banksia marginata*, silver banksia; *Burchardia umbellata*, milkmaids; *Comesperma volubile*, blue lovecreeper; *Coprosma nitida*, mountain currant; *Correa reflex*, common correa; *Dampiera stricta*, blue dampiera; *Dillwynia sericea*, showy parrotpea; *Diplarrena moraea*, white flag-iris; *Drosera peltata*, pale sundew; *D. spatulata*, rosy sundew; *Epacris impressa*, common heath (pink & white flowers); *Eucalyptus amygdalina*, black peppermint; *E. obliqua*, stringybark; *E. viminalis*, white gum; *Exocarpos cupressiformis*, common native currant; *Goodenia lanata*, trailing native-primrose; *Hibbertia ? riparia*, guineaflower; *Kunzea ambigua*, white kunzea; *Leptospermum scoparium*, common teatree; *Leucopogon* sp., beardheath; *Lomatia tinctoria*, guitar plant; *Platylobium triangulare*, arrow flatpea; *Pomaderris elliptica* sp., yellow dogwood; *Poranthera microphylla*, small poranthera; *Pultenaea daphnoides*, heartleaf bushpea; *P. juniperina*, prickly beauty; *Spyridium* sp., dustymiller (hairy leaves); *Stackhousia monogyna*, forest candles; *Stylidium* sp., triggerplant (leaves only); *Tetratheca* sp., pinkbells; *Thysanotus patersonii*, twining fringelily; *Viola hederacea*, ivyleaf violet; *Xanthosia pilosa*, woolly crossherb; *Xanthorrhoea australis*, grass tree.

Orchids - *Acianthus caudatus*, mayfly orchid; *Chiloglottis* sp., bird-orchid leaves; *Diuris orientis*, eastern wallflower orchid; *Dockrillia striolata* subsp *chrysantha*, yellow rock-orchid (**pictured right**); *Pyrorchis nigricans*, fire orchid; *Thelymitra ? rubra*, pink sun orchid.

Ferns & allies - *Asplenium flabellifolium*, necklace fern; *Blechnum nudum*, fishbone fern; *Hypolepis rugosula*, ruddy groundfern; *Lycopodium deuterodensum*, conifer clubmoss; *Pteridium esculentum*, bracken fern.



Image K Manning

Grasses - *Dianella revoluta*, spreading flaxlily; *D. tasmanica*, forest flaxlily; *Gahnia grandis*, cutting grass; *Hierochloe* sp., holygrass; *Lepidosperma concavum*, sand swordsedg; *Lomandra longifolia*, sagg; *Xanthorrhoea* sp., grasstree.

Fungi - *Calostoma fuscum*, common prettymouth; *Heterotextus peziziformis*, jellybells; *Mycena viscidocruenta*, ruby bonnet.

Birds - *Acanthiza pusilla*, brown thornbill; *Cacatua galerita*, sulphur-crested cockatoo; *Colluricincla harmonica*, grey shrike-thrush; *Corvus tasmanicus*, forest Raven; *Hirundo neoxena*, welcome swallow; *Malurus cyaneus*, superb fairy-wren; *Pardalotus punctatus*, spotted pardalote; *Platycercus caledonicus*, green rosella; *Strepera versicolor*, grey currawong.

Frogs - *Crinia signifera*, common eastern froglet; *C. tasmaniensis*, bleating frog.

Marsupials - *Dasyurus viverrinus*, Eastern Quoll.

Snails & Slugs - *Caryodes dufresnii*, snail; *Cystopelta petterdi*, slug; *Helicarion cuvieri*, semi-slug

Field Trip – Sunday 31 October – Midlands wildflowers

With a forecast of 6 to 19 degrees for all localities intended to be visited 5 members met at Campbell Town on a bright, sunny morning, most welcome following our recent cold snap. First stop was at the Tunbridge Reserve where we were joined by Prue.

Here we were searching for *Prasophyllum tunbridgense* (pictured) which we eventually found in flower but not inside two roped off areas with keep out signs. I subsequently found out that these two areas are for seed collection later on. Many



specimens of a sun orchid in advanced bud stage were found as we traversed the hillside with many other plants in flower as well. There was quite a cool breeze blowing which was not appreciated. By the time we returned to our cars it was close to lunch time so we decided to go to our next stop at Ross and have it there. We picked the small area down near the bridge to have it which turned out to be a big mistake as there was a strong cold breeze coming off the extremely flooded river. We were fascinated by a Eurasian Coot taking advantage of the current to cruise up and down, and back and forth looking for tucker. We were joined by two more members here bringing our total to eight for the day. The southern entrance road from the highway was closed due either to flooding or damage from the flood so we had to travel up to the northern entrance.

After lunch we went up to the Pioneer Cemetery but did not find *Pterostylis commutata*, our target. This part of the cemetery has become very neglected and full of weeds and exotic escapes from grave sites.

From Ross we journeyed north to the Campbell Town Golf Course where we very quickly found many specimens of the two *Prasophyllum*s we were searching for, as we proceeded south along the unmowed section near the highway we discovered more and more various plants and this continued after we crossed a fairway and started northward. We eventually found two specimens of *Caladenia anthracina* (pictured), our third target here. What appears to be an abandoned Lapwing nest with four



eggs was found, presumed abandoned because we were not dive-bombed by the owners. Roy remarked on the high number of rare and endangered plants we saw on the day. Just before departure we were treated to a delicious vanilla slice from the Ross Bakery thanks to Helen's generosity. Brian was thanked for organizing the day thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Jeff Campbell

Tunbridge Plant List - *Bossiaea prostrata*, creeping bossiaea; *Bossiaea riparia*, leafless bossiaea; *Daviesia ulicifolia* ssp. *ulicifolia*, yellow spiky bitterpea; *Leucochrysum albicans* ssp. *tricolor*, grassland paper daisy; *Microseris ?walteri*, lowland yam daisy; *Pimelea ?sp.* Tunbridge grassland riceflower; *Pimelea humilis*, dwarf riceflower; *Prasophyllum tunbridgense*, tunbridge leek-orchid; *Pultenaea prostrata*, silky bushpea; *Stackhousia subterranea*, grassland candles; *Thelymitra pauciflora*, slender sun orchid



Campbell Town Golf Course Plant List - *Arthropodium minus*, small vanilla-lily; *Bossiaea prostrata*, creeping bossiaea; *Brachyscome decipiens*, field daisy; *Caladenia anthracina*, black-tipped spider orchid; *Convolvulus angustissimus* ssp. *angustissimus*, blushing bindweed; *Craspedia glauca*, common billy buttons; *Drosera ? hookeri*, grassland sundew; *Leptorhynchos squamatus* ssp. *squamatus*, scaly buttons; *Lomandra nana*, dwarf mat-rush; *Microtis ? unifolia*, common onion orchid; *Pimelea humilis*, dwarf

riceflower; *Prasophyllum incorrectum*, gaping leek orchid; ***Prasophyllum olidum***, pungent leek orchid (pictured); *Pultenaea prostrata*, silky bushpea; *Stackhousia subterranea*, grassland candles; *Thelymitra pauciflora*, slender sun orchid

All images in above article provided by Jeff Campbell

John Skemp Memorial Lecture - Tuesday 2 November

- Guest speaker Todd Dudley - The decade of ecosystems restoration

Helen introduced Todd Dudley and his talk on ecosystem restoration. He started by telling us that he would give his version of the history of ecosystem restoration in Australia followed by a talk on the Skyline Tier Project he was involved with on the East Coast.

Todd told us that over the past 50 years bush and ecological restoration has emerged as a key nature conservation practice in Australia while not being fully recognised. His first slide showed a dust storm in Broken Hill in 1907 and he told us that this was the reason for the first known habitat restoration project in Australia. Broken Hill had huge problems with dust storms from land degradation caused by land clearing, domestic livestock and feral animals.

Margaret and Albert Morris, a member of the Barrier Field Naturalists and a keen botanist, came up with the revolutionary idea of fencing an area around Broken Hill to exclude livestock and rabbits and allow the land to naturally regenerate. This was done in 1936 establishing a diverse ecosystem similar to the original with a variety of plants not just a few planted trees. It was noted that the native vegetation returned quite quickly.

Todd told us that not much more happened until the 60's and 70's when the Bradley sisters started weeding and replanting in their patch of bush around Mosman on the north shore of

Sydney. They developed a philosophy and technique for restoring degraded bushland around Sydney which became known as the Bradley Method. The Bradley Method followed the three principles of securing the best areas first, minimizing disturbance to the natural conditions and to not over clear.

One of the reasons this worked so well in Sydney was the Hawkesbury sandstone country is ill suited to forestry and agriculture resulting in a lot of natural bush being there even though it was becoming degraded. There was also a huge diversity of wild flowers and the National Trust of NSW also looks at natural systems, unlike other states where the Trust is only concerned with heritage buildings.

The next stage in this process came with the 1989 publication of Robin Buchanan's *Bush Regeneration, Recovering Australian Landscapes*. This book went into a little more detail than the Bradley Method with the main difference being to acknowledge in some cases it was appropriate to disturb the bush with chemicals, fire or other forms of disturbance. A new version of the Buchanan book came out in 2009 called *Restoring natural areas in Australia* with the main difference being the emphasis on ecological resilience, first assessing the ability of a section of bush to self-sustain before deciding on the appropriate action to be taken. Features such as the presence or absence of native or exotic flora and fauna, the aspect, the type and usage of surrounding land, the fire history and even the shape of the area to be restored with round or square being preferable to long, thin blocks. These features were all considered before deciding on the actions needed for the restoration.

In the early 1990s the Landcare movement started with an agreement between The Australian Conservation Foundation and the National Farmers Federation to form the National Landcare Program which resulted in a lot of on ground conservation work.

Another publication came out in 2016 titled *National standards for the practice of ecological restoration in Australia*. In the six principals defined in this book there is an emphasis on ecological restoration, returning the area to what would have been there originally, rather than just revegetating to control soil erosion. It also defined the work as professional, requiring skills and knowledge, not just something for the unemployed and volunteers.

Todd told us that it was the United Nations decade of ecosystem restoration with the motto of "Preventing, halting and reversing the degradation of ecosystems worldwide". He considered that it was unrealistic though an excellent aspiration and 10 years was far too little. Such a change could require hundreds of years and a few changes in the way things are done. To start with there should be more holistic laws and policies to complement restoration rather than conflict with it, making ecological sustainability a higher priority not just managing the decline and he considered the type of country we live in cannot support an ever expanding population. The task also requires continuity of funding and recently there has been a decline in public funding with a requirement to partnerships with the private sector. While a good thing in many ways, he considered that such an important public interest issue should attract more government funding.

His other issue was education noting that environmental education is not on the curriculum, probably due to the education systems aim toward employment and this is not a particularly high employment area. More public funding for the environment could lead to greater employment opportunities and better education outcomes.

He gave a short talk on his concerns about fuel reduction burns and cultural burns stating that many ecosystems were not suited to regular cool burns. There did not seem to be enough studies into the long term effect with no pre or post studies on biodiversity or weeds. Too short an interval between burns leads to an impoverished understory, especially with obligate seeders, plants which regenerate from seed after fire, as too frequent burns eliminates these species.

The talk moved to his not for profit east coast group, the North East Bioregional Network. This community group is involved in advocacy, land use planning, environmental education and

ecological restoration. It was involved in getting a 1 kilometre subdivision prohibition implemented into the Break O' Day planning scheme and last year successfully appealed against a 54 lot sub division at St Helens, facilitated 60 Land for Wildlife covenants and 30 conservation covenants and is currently running the shore bird conservation project. They also run public forums and public meetings on various issues and did all the mapping for the state forestry agreement for the north east of Tasmania.

His talk moved onto the Skyline Tier Project involving approximately 2,000 hectare of plantation behind Scamander and Beaumaris. This plantation was established in the late 60s and early 70s by clearing and burning *Eucalyptus sieberi*, ironbark, with some *E. obliqua*, brown top stringy bark.

In the early 2000s harvesting was started and Todd noticed a small area where a fire had been regenerating with native plants. He approached the logging company about putting some of the land back to native forest and they were not interested. After four years of negotiations the company agreed to a 40 hectare trial site. This went well and the company allocated more and more land to the project with the present total being around 700 hectares.

The methodology was to use hot ecological burns which germinated the native seeds still in the soil since the original clearing while also suppressing the self-seeding pine trees. Before and after photos showed the recently cleared land and the impressive regrowth after seven years and over 150 native species had been noted. There is a follow up to remove any pine regrowth which would compete with the natives and pines are virtually the only weed in these regrowth areas. Todd told us the ridgeline was the top of the catchment for most of the coastal waterways and wetlands stretching from Dianas Basin to Scamander reducing the nutrient and weed infestation associated with restorations below industrial, agricultural or urban land use. This means the project has restored nearly an entire catchment area.

The project also includes restoration of some threatened forest communities including areas of *Eucalyptus globulus*, the blue gum, and *E. ovata*, the black gum, also swift parrot habitat, areas with *Gahnia radula* and SE facing gullies which favour wet loving species and animals like the giant velvet worm.

The slide show featured many before and after shots with impressive regrowth in around seven years with Todd telling us successful projects such as this increased our knowledge of how to manage a variety of land use areas. Also in times of doom and gloom this work was showing that something positive could be achieved. It also educated people giving them a conservation ethic while providing an alternative outdoor work environment. There are many places in Tasmania where this sort of project could work, areas of recently harvested plantations in poor quality places with plenty of viable seed in the ground, surrounded by native forests and with unemployed locals having the skills to carry out the work.

Todd told us of other projects including restoration of a quarry at St Helens Point by simple spreading seed bearing branches on the ground from *Allocasuarina*, *Leptospermum* and *Melaleuca*. The capsules open up, the seeds drop out and germinate and the branches protect the seedlings from browsing. The before photo showed a typical quarry with bare ground and then four years later the resultant trees were up to 4 metres tall. This method is only suitable for small areas of one or two hectares.

Another small project involved getting the council to fence a small roadside area instead of adding topsoil and planting trees and around 60 species of native plants came up.

After 10 minutes of questions and answers Roy gave the thanks and led the acclamation. After which Jeff explained the origins of the Skemps Memorial Lecture and presented Todd with a copy of the Club's book.

Noel Manning

BioBlitz - Fri 5 to Sun 7 - Mt Morriston

A good rollup for the weekend meant that a large area was covered over the 3 days. On Friday Roy, Graham and I set off ahead of the rest as Roy had to return home that afternoon. Our first stop was in a paddock above a creek and along a fairly steep hill. We were discovering plants from when we passed through the fence and almost everywhere we went. We climbed part way up the hill and when it became steeper the other 2 kept going to the top while I proceeded laterally along the hill for some distance before heading down to the creek to follow it back to the car. After the other 2 arrived a while later we proceeded further down the road, pulled up for lunch and hopped through the fence into another paddock on the other side of the road. After spending some time here we returned to the car and went back to Beaufront. We were provided with lamb chops and salad with a baked spud for tea.

On Saturday Julian drove 4 of us out to look for *Leucochrysum albicans* (picture right). We found 9 sites in 4 of the 5 paddocks we searched. The 5th paddock has an eagle nest in it so we had to stay below the crest of the hill so we didn't create a disturbance if it was occupied. On returning to the pick-up site we decided to follow the large dam back to the farm buildings some distance away. Luckily, about 2/3rds of the way back we were spotted by Kerry and another vehicle heading in to do a water survey. When she called Julian to pick us up he



wasn't very far way and we had barely returned to Beaufront before a heavy shower hit. The water group were caught in it and were saturated. Tea was a curry for the mob and I was given a less spicy meal.



On Sunday Julian and Annabel drove James and I out to 1 of the 2 sites of *Caladenia anthracina* to confirm it was still there. We found 3 plants but no flowers. We were left to do some more botanizing until after lunch then called Kerry for a pick up. James had to leave early to return to Hobart so we were back at Beaufront before 2 o'clock, rounding off a busy weekend.

Jeff Campbell

Ptilotus spathulatus (images Jeff Campbell)

Community Volunteering - Catch it in the Catchment – 7 November

For the third year running, club members have participated in a clean-up along the Kings Meadows Rivulet as part of Catch it in the Catchment.

Noel, Karl and Karen pulled on their gumboots and headed for the golf course side of the rivulet and spillway area. A big thank you to the Manager of the golf course who arranged for the closure of the fairway closest to where members were working to ensure their safety while removing bottles, plastics, polystyrene and tin cans from around the pond edges and amongst the reeds. They then headed to the spillway on the walking track side of the pond and collected mainly pieces of plastic that had been caught in amongst the rocks and vegetation.

Alison and Nick from Tamar NRM pulled out 4 of our trolleys hidden in the bushes in an adjacent car park and collected a large amount of plastic waste caught up in the fence line of the golf course and along the golf course side of the rivulet. Member Tom pulled 3 trolleys from the rivulet managing to not get his feet wet and Tina was on hands and knees pulling rubbish out from under bushes along the pathway. As the supervisor and organiser I cleaned up the grassed area and under the bushes close to the Woolworths Shopping Centre, providing assistance where necessary and extra bags. I also talked with walkers in the area who had asked what we were doing and heard from volunteers that they were also thanked by regular users of the walkway.

All up we picked up, scooped out and pulled out 32.5kg of rubbish, along with 7 trolleys, a reserved parking sign, a shopping basket, the front of an air conditioning unit and a milk crate to name a few of the bigger items. Most of the recyclables were found in and around the pond.

It will be interesting to clean this site next year to see if a container deposit scheme makes a difference, as we filled up 3 bags full of recyclables which could have been worth \$15 - \$20, if the scheme was already up and running. We also met a few locals (ducks) along the way happy to have their home territory cleared of rubbish. Claire Manning



Thank you to Nick Flittner from Tamar NRM, for the image

Skemps Day – Saturday Nov 27 – Spring Clean

Eleven members arrived at Skemps on a warm sunny day to spring clean the Centre.

Claire, Caitlin and I cleaned the kitchen by first emptying cupboards and wiping them out. All plates, bowls, cups, glasses and cutlery were washed along with serving cutlery hanging on the wall and we finished by culling chipped, stained, broken and rusty items.

Tina wiped all the surfaces clean in the bedrooms and



bathrooms, and both Helen and Tina cleaned surfaces in the main room. Tina and Tom (T) washed all the windows inside and out. Noel removed stains from the carpet and steam cleaned the walls and tiles in the bathroom and steam cleaned the barbecue.

Jeff removed half the mattresses from the beds and replaced sheets, volunteering to take the sheets home for washing and to replace the



remaining mattresses with fresh sheets next Tuesday. Noel and Jeff

installed a paper towel holder in the kitchen and Noel and I put gutter guard on the western side of the building where birds are getting in and nesting.

Prue pruned and cleared weed from under the *Blandfordia punicea*, Christmas bells, located outside the kitchen window. This is a popular plant with photographers and visitors, and we like to see it at its best. When finished it was noted there were at least 6 flower stems evident, so we should see a nice display of the bell-shaped flowers soon.

Before we left that afternoon we held the first meeting of the Committee for 2021/22 including the first attendance by new member Brian.

Members often went about tasks they noted needed doing without mentioning them and being a very busy day my apologies if your contribution has been missed in this write-up.

All told a good day with only a thorough vacuuming needed, which will be done next Tuesday.



Karen Manning

Saturday 18 December - Field Trip to Arthurs Lake

This is a joint trip with members of the Australian Plant Society, Northern Group. The meeting point is on Lyttleton Street Longford (near the public toilets) before 9 am so attendees can car-pool and then depart at 9 am sharp for Arthurs Lake. There will be stops along the way to look at the flowers, which Roy Skabo has said should be close to their peak at this time of year.

Lunch will be somewhere near the lake so bring a chair along with all other usual gear. Good walking shoes or boots and gaiters would be a great idea.

Sunday 30 January 22 – Field Trip to East Beach

We will be revisiting the rock pool area at East Beach at Low Head to see how they have changed over the last twelve months. The tide will be at its lowest (.45 metres) at 4.20pm on this day. Meet at the beach at 3pm and we will walk out with the tide. Bring your evening meal and we can either sit on the beach or in the picnic area off the beach, depending on the day and the chill in the wind. Contact Karen on 0419 596 261 if you require further information.

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/>

Emails: secretary@lfnc.org.au

newsletter@lfnc.org.au

program@lfnc.org.au

treasurer@lfnc.org.au

Find us on 

