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## General meetings

Held at 7:30 pm on the fourth Friday of each month at the Newborough Uniting Church, Old Sale Road Newborough VIC 3825



This pair of Horned Puffins *Fratrercula corniculata* was photographed by David Stickney during his 2016 trip to the Kamchatka Peninsula and Kuril Islands in Russia.

## **Upcoming events**

March general meeting: Friday 24 March

Drouin Significant Tree Register – Peter Ware & Judy Farmer

Excursion: Saturday 25 March – Drouin. Details TBC.

Botany Group: Saturday 1 April – RJ Chambers Flora & Fauna Reserve, Pakenham Upper, led by Andrew Green.

Bird Group: Tuesday 4 April – Traralgon Railway Reservoir Conservation Reserve. Meet at carpark in Hickox St by 9.30am.

April general meeting: Friday 28 April

Revegetation of bogs in the high country – Conor Wilson

Excursion: Saturday 29 April – Billys Creek, Morwell National Park.

Bird Group: Tuesday 2 May – Boolarra/Budgeree area. Details TBC.

Botany Group: Saturday 6 May – Matt Campbell's property, Jeeralang Junction

Bird Group: Thursday 11 May – EA Wetland survey. Meet by 9:30am at Morwell River Bridge gate.

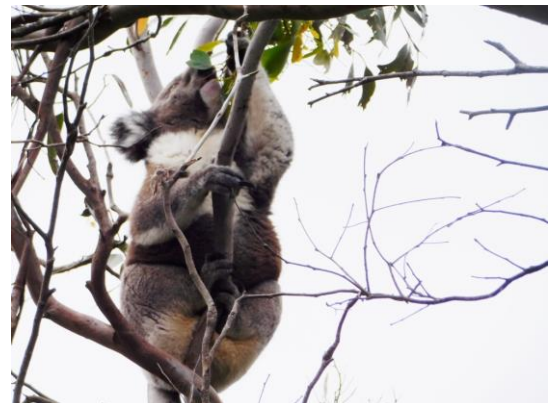
## CLUB SPRING CAMP 2016

*This year's spring camp was held from 21-25th October in the Otway Ranges, based at the Apollo Bay Youth Hostel. The first morning we drove to the Aire River camping area and nearby lookout for some bird and koala watching, braving cold wind and rain. The weather improved in the afternoon for two pleasant rainforest walks at Melba Gully and Maits Rest, where we were impressed by the ancient trees and carnivorous snails. On Sunday we stopped in at The Redwoods, on the way to the Otway Fly for magnificent treetop views of the rainforest, before undertaking a steep walk at Triplet Falls and following a winding road to Lake Elizabeth. Our final day began at the historical Cape Otway Lighthouse, before we headed to Blanket Bay and then on to the Conservation Ecology Centre to learn about local wildlife research and conservation efforts.*

### Aire River, Glenaire Lookout & Melba Gully – Saturday morning

The day began with everyone gathering at the front of the youth hostel, before cars drove via Marengo to the Aire River camping area. On the way, a Wedge-tailed Eagle was seen overhead. First stop was Aire River east campground. There was a short walk to the edge of the inlet, but no birds could be seen on the water or at the water's edge. Back on higher ground, it began to rain and the group huddled in the picnic shelter, but we soon ventured out as various birds and different types of flora beckoned, including one of the kangaroo apple species (probably *Solanum laciniatum*). Birds seen here included Pied Currawong, Crimson Rosella, Magpie, Yellow-faced honeyeater and Red-browed finch. A black wallaby was one of the highlights as it hopped across in front of us.

At the next campground, Aire River west, "bird of the day" was briefly spotted by some of our group – a Sacred Kingfisher. Other birds seen here included Willie Wagtail, Welcome Swallow, Kookaburra, Grey Shrike-thrush, fairy-wrens and more Red-browed finches. There were also a number of Koalas here – three different sets of "mother and baby" seemingly asleep, huddled close together against the cold wind, and a single male who was more active, enjoying a breakfast of Swamp Gum leaves (*Eucalyptus ovata*).



Koala at Aire River (Photo: Wendy McDonald)

Then we drove down the road to the Glenaire lookout over Johanna Beach. We passed some very wet paddocks where a few Black Swans and shelducks were noted. It was very cold and windy at the lookout, the surf looked very rough, and the path down onto the beach had been washed out by a previous high tide. We didn't stop here long, and as we came back towards the carpark, Terri Allen spotted "plant of the day" a little way along a side track – *Myosotis australis*, a small herb that grows in sandy soils. Morning tea was enjoyed here in another picnic shelter, which was poorly designed as it wasn't keeping out the prevailing winds!



Glenaire Lookout (Photo: Wendy McDonald)

Then it was into the cars once again for a drive to Johanna Falls. The location wasn't well signposted and despite trying a number of side roads and turnoffs, this waterfall proved elusive.

Instead, we headed to Melba Gully where we deliberately set up our chairs for lunch in the bus stop area of the car park as it was one of the few places exposed to the warm sun that had just appeared. After lunch, we headed

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into the forest. Near the start of the Melba Gully walk, two feral deer were spotted. The walk took us through some very attractive cool temperate rainforest where one of the highlights was seeing a couple of examples of the unusual, carnivorous Otway Black Snail. A floral highlight was a tall waratah *Telopea oreades* in full flower but, as this is usually found east of Lakes Entrance, it had obviously been planted.

There was Prickly Moses *Acacia verticillata*, lots of Myrtle Beech *Nothofagus cunninghamii* and some of the 33 different species of ferns to be found in this park were also identified as we walked along. These included Hard Water-fern *Blechnum wattsii*, Soft Water-fern *Blechnum minus*, Mother Shield-fern *Polystichum proliferum*, Soft Tree-fern *Dicksonia antarctica* and Rough Tree-fern *Cyathea australis*. Birds spotted in Melba Gully included Golden Whistler, Eastern Yellow Robin, Brown Thornbill and Striated Thornbill. After Melba Gully, the group headed back towards Apollo Bay with the next stop being Maits Rest.

Wendy McDonald

### **Maits Rest – Saturday afternoon**

Walking through this section of the Otways was like entering *The Lord of the Rings* territory with its huge, ancient Antarctic beeches *Nothofagus cunninghamii* covered in ferns, lichens, mosses and fungi, and crawling with insects. Some in the group were able to find the elusive Otway Black Snail *Victaphanta compacta* but sadly these specimens were squashed. Some of us had seen live ones earlier in the day at Melba Gully.

The walk at Maits Rest was a feast for the eyes and the soul as well as a great opportunity for novices to learn about the plants of the area with, in particular, Ken, Margaret and Wendy as guides. If anything, this section of the excursion revealed how much I (Joëlle) did not know and the need to keep a log of sort. Of course this is the dilemma for a “would be” Field Nat – to be in the moment, or to record and note for later.

The highlight of Maits Rest was possibly finding Maroonhood orchids *Pterostylis pedunculata* growing on a tree-fern trunk just below the fronds.

The birds were abundant but very tricky to see in the thick undergrowth. Jay stalked the Rose Robins that Dave Mules had already seen to identify, until they came out and frolicked for a while in the canopy just below the car park.

Maits Rest is a short (<1 km), well-graded gravel path and boardwalk circuit just off the Great Ocean Road, about 15 km west of Apollo Bay. It is part of the Great Otway National Park and is managed by Parks Victoria. We recommend it as a stop, and how long you spend there would only depend on how much time you had, and how detailed you wanted your species counts to be. If you go there at night, it apparently has both glow worms and Yellow-bellied Gliders. Hobbits, orcs, ents and their friends may be in the eye of the beholder.

Joëlle Champert and Jay Duncan

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## The Redwoods, Otway Fly, Triplet Falls & Lake Elizabeth – Sunday

Sunday was cold again, but fine. Again we headed west along the Great Ocean Road, then turned up Binns Rd which is a windy gravel road leading north towards Beech Forest through Myrtle Beech forest. We stopped at a ferny bank carpeted in Fan-ferns, and found three types of *Blechnum* – gristle, hard water and fishbone. Along the Aire Valley Road we stopped at The Redwoods, a magnificent stand of Californian Redwoods *Sequoia sempervirens* planted in 1939 beside the Aire River for a picnic area. This short stop was considerably extended by a pair of Pink Robins flitting amongst the tree-ferns along the river below the bridge. Everyone was mesmerised and lined up along the bridge with binoculars trained on them.



Pink Robin (Photo: Joëlle Champert)

The Otway Fly, just past Beech Forest, was our next stop and, after coffee in the warm café, most people headed off to the Treetop Walk. It was a 1.2km walk in to the access point due to a tree fall, but well worth the effort for the bird's eye view of the cool temperate rainforest. We walked amongst the crowns of Mountain Ash and looked down on Myrtle Beech and Blackwoods and a carpet of ferns below. Some Myrtle Beech trees had rather large leaves of a lighter colour, and we wondered if they were diseased. It was also striking to see all the ferns directly below the walk with browned fronds and we decided it must be due to rain leaching chemicals from the metal structure.

A late lunch was had in the carpark at nearby Triplet Falls, entertained by male Satin Bowerbirds and Crescent Honeyeaters. Following a steep descent through cool, damp fern gullies and Myrtle Beech forest we went through the many viewing points of the triple cascade which was pouring over the rocks due to the recent heavy rains. Tree-fern trunks were clothed in tiny ferns and mosses in this damp environment. Steep steps led back up past the site of the old sawmill with its remnant earthworks and rusting machinery.



Satinwood (Photo: Ken Harris)

To reach Lake Elizabeth, near Forrest, we had a long drive on windy roads, but the vegetation was lovely to drive through with tall Mountain Ash and tree-ferns. A very striking tree covered in white flowers we saw a lot of along the roadside was Satinwood *Nematolepis squamea subsp. squamea* (was *Phebalium squameum*), confined mainly to the Otway range. Lake Elizabeth was formed in 1952 by a landslide blocking the Barwon River East Branch after torrential rain. It wasn't discovered for a while until an exploring party went up to see why the

river had stopped flowing. The walk in to the lake was a kilometre along a damp track with Blackwoods, tree-ferns and many understorey plants. Time did not permit a walk around the lake, so we birdwatched for a while, seeing a cormorant perched on one of the dead trees in the lake, as well as Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, pardalotes and a Yellow Robin, with a Fan-tailed Cuckoo calling in the distance.

Wendy & Ken Savage

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## Cape Otway, Blanket Bay & The Conservation Ecology Centre – Monday

We assembled at the Cape Otway Lighthouse before breaking into groups depending on personal interest (birds, plants and history). The Cape Otway Lighthouse is the oldest lighthouse in Victoria, built from local sandstone in 1848, and was often the first land a ship would encounter after months of sailing. This lighthouse and its associated buildings have taken on iconic status. Certainly it features as a “must see” on many international visitors’ lists when driving around the Victorian coast.

The walk to the top of Cape Otway Lighthouse, 20 metres high, is relatively easy and from the top gives a panoramic view out to sea. This was the best day we experienced, being sunny with only a light breeze. Walking the grounds, there are relics from WW2 when Japanese submarines and German raiders operated in Bass Strait. Buildings for this period lack the architectural merit of the earlier lighthouse buildings.

The Cape Otway Lighthouse area has been heavily modified but the main surviving plants are Woolly or Silky Tea-tree *Leptospermum lanigerum* and Coast Beard-heath *Leucopogon parviflorus*. Sadly the pest plant Myrtle-leaf Milkwort *Polygala myrtifolia* was very noticeable. Short-tailed Shearwaters and Australasian Gannets were clearly visible out to sea, and in the coastal bushes, Silvereyes, Yellow-faced Honeyeaters and Singing Honeyeaters were seen. Some people were lucky enough to view, and even photograph, a Rufous Bristlebird.



Blanket Bay (Photo: Peter McDonald)

Phil had everyone on a strict timetable so it was then on to Blanket Bay. This is a camping area and was very quiet after the Cape Otway Lighthouse. Prior to the Great Otway National Park being declared in 2004, this area had some fishing huts and parts of these huts still remain. The vegetation and coast was very peaceful with Manna Gums *Eucalyptus viminalis* and Drooping She-oaks *Casuarina verticillata* dominating, and after some strolling we enjoyed lunch accompanied by some friendly Pied Currawongs.

Other birds seen were Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Brown Thornbill and Little Black Cormorant off the coast. Some rockpooling proved disappointing; limpets, kelp and Neptune’s Necklace were all that was seen.

Three of us went to try to see a Rufous Bristlebird (previously seen on a track). Firstly we met a skink, then a Blotched Bluetongue Lizard and then a Tiger Snake, but alas, no Rufous Bristlebird. Being booked into the Conservation Centre at 2pm, we drove back along the Cape Otway Road to meet Shane and Mark, our guides for the afternoon.

The Conservation Ecology Centre was founded to create an Otways once more alive with native wildlife. The Centre’s mission is to work directly on the land, and strategically with people, to repair and rebalance the damage from the past. We discussed the dead trees passed on the road to the lighthouse, which have had a lot of recent publicity with the koalas eating themselves out of house and home. Over 70% of the Manna Gum community has been destroyed. A multi-disciplined approach, with a range of strategies, is being adopted to reverse the damage to trees and the loss of Koalas. The University of Western Sydney is studying the relationship between

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Koalas, their physiology and Manna Gums. The koalas have a limited home range and stay put rather than travel. This necessitated 36 Koalas being relocated to Aireys Inlet for further study. Relocating and euthanising Koalas does raise issues around ethics and wildlife management.

On our walking tour of the Centre we firstly looked at revegetation works comprising direct seeding and planting of Swamp Gums *Eucalyptus ovata* and Manna Gums which is helping to reverse habitat loss. There have been 93,000 trees planted around Cape Otway in recent years. Shane and Mark showed us a paddock where they were planning to trial the planting of native Wallaby Grass *Rytidosperma* sp. and Kangaroo Grass *Themeda triandra* using direct and hand-planting of seedlings. The difficulty is that native grass seeds are expensive to buy and do not compete well with pasture grasses.

A leisurely walk followed, through remnant bush consisting of damp, sandy woodland and dry sclerophyll forest. The overstorey was dominated by Manna Gums, Brown Stringybark *Eucalyptus baxteri* and Messmate *E. obliqua*. Prickly Moses *Acacia verticillata*, Common Heath *Epacris impressa* and Raspwort *Gonocarpus tetragynus* were noted, and on the ground a range of wildflowers such as Creamy Candles *Stackhousia monogyna* and Turquoise Berry *Drymophila cyanocarpa*. Orchids were out too, including Tall Greenhood *Pterostylis melagramma*, Slaty Helmet-orchid *Corybas incurvus*, Nodding Greenhood *Pterostylis nutans* and Common Bird-orchid *Chiloglottis valida*.

The last section of our visit was seeing in captivity a Tiger Quoll *Dasyurus maculatus* and two Eastern Quolls *Dasyurus viverrinus*. The Tiger Quoll has been limited to four sightings in the last decade in the Otways and Eastern Quolls are extinct on the mainland but surviving in Tasmania. The male Tiger Quoll weighs up to 5 kg and ranges over 100 ha. The females range up to 200 ha, denning the young and protecting resources.



Tiger Quoll (Photo: Peter McDonald)

Life span is five to six years in the wild. Pressure on Tiger Quolls comes from habitat loss and predation of the young by cats, foxes and dogs. We listened to how the use of dogs to detect Tiger Quolls is a novel approach with private owners having trained dogs to detect scats on public and private land for DNA analysis, giving a better understanding of the Tiger Quoll's genetic makeup to aid conservation. The captive Tiger Quoll was bold and happy to come out and take food but the Eastern Quoll sisters, smaller animals, were very timid and we had only fleeting glimpses. Shane and Mark pointed out that while the Eastern Quoll was surviving in Tasmania, the facial tumour killing Tasmanian Devils had led to an increased number of cats predated the Eastern Quolls.

It was an interesting visit to the Conservation Ecology Centre. The passion, commitment and willingness of the staff to involve the general public with conservation is commendable. Certainly I can't help but see that protection of the natural environment and wildlife requires that NGOs in Australia take a leading role (which they are doing) rather than relying on governments for action.

Peter McDonald

## Russia's Ring of Fire: Kamchatka and the Kuril Islands

The presentation by club president David Stickney at the October general meeting was the place to be for superb photos of such spectacular birds as the Rhinoceros Auklet and Tufted Puffin, to mention just two of the 131 bird species identified during a ship-based tour of Far East Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula and Kuril Islands in this year's northern summer. The Kurils form a long chain of mostly uninhabited islands from the southern end of the peninsula to the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido, in a region of high volcanic activity. The group used Zodiacs for cruising in shallow waters and accessing land sites – except for one eventful day early in the trip when a major cyclone brought winds of up to 100 mph. Sightings of no less than 20 mammal species added to David's great experience.

Albatrosses are clearly a key focus of such an expedition. David explained that there are now 24 species identified across the world according to the International Ornithological Congress (IOC), with 20 found in the southern oceans between 40°S and 60°S and four in the northern hemisphere. The latter include two species that breed in the Hawaiian Islands, one on Torishima Island in Japan and one in the Galapagos. Both Hawaii-breeding species were seen, being the relatively common Laysan Albatross,



Laysan Albatross (Photo: David Stickney)

with a 2m wingspan, and just one sighting of the Black-footed Albatross, which has a black bill and is sooty-brown all over except for some white around the bill and upper tail coverts. To give an idea of relative sizes, David mentioned that the largest species, such as the Southern Royal Albatross, have a wingspan of around 3.5 m. The group was excited to see the rare Short-tailed Albatross which breeds on Torishima Island. It was thought to be extinct in the period 1930-1950, following mass slaughtering, but it has recovered to the approximately 400 breeding pairs now recorded. It is now the rarest albatross species and they were very fortunate to see 14 individuals – it was thought that the cyclone had brought them in closer to the coast.

I'll briefly cover some of the many other non-passerine bird sightings that David mentioned:

- The Northern Fulmar, which is widely distributed but is a different subspecies to the North Atlantic species.
- Two storm-petrel species, the Leach's and Fork-tailed, were seen following the ship at night. The name 'petrel' derives from St Peter because they can appear as if walking on water.
- Fourteen auk species, including the Common Guillemot, Brunnich's Guillemot (with blacker plumage), Pigeon Guillemot, Kuril Guillemot (a new species, having previously been regarded as a subspecies of the Pigeon Guillemot), Spectacled Guillemot (with a very small distribution), Rhinoceros Auklet (so named because of its bizarre white horn, seen only in the breeding season), Crested Auklet (which forms huge flocks on the islands off East Russia) and the extraordinary Whiskered Auklet with seven wispy plumes.

- Two of the world's three puffin species – the Tufted Puffin (the largest species and all-black except for its white face) and the Horned Puffin (with a bigger facial patch and a white underbelly). Intriguingly, the outer surface of a puffin's huge bill drops off outside of the breeding season.
- The East Russian region supports 30 gull species (cf. Australian waters' count of just three resident species). The group's sightings included the Slaty-backed Gull (the most common gull with back and wings darker than other gulls), Black-headed Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Glaucous Gull, Kamchatka Gull (a subspecies of the Common Gull) and two Kittiwakes – the Black-legged and Red-legged. The latter species was a major goal of the expedition, as it occurs only in the Aleutian Islands and Bering Sea and is classified as Vulnerable.
- Two terns – the Common Tern that migrates to Australia, and the Aleutian Tern endemic to the Bering Sea.
- The Arctic, Pomarine and Long-tailed Skuas.
- The attractive Red-throated Diver with a rufous throat patch and a grey face and neck.
- The Red-necked Grebe, widely distributed but striking with its rufous breast.
- Waders seen included the Red-necked Stint (which breeds in eastern Siberia and migrates to Australia), the Rock Sandpiper (endemic to the Bering Sea), the Wood Sandpiper and the Common Snipe (which is widespread across northern Russia and Europe). The latter is a different species to Australia's Latham Snipe which breeds in Japan.
- The Harlequin Duck was a frequent find despite the group seeing few other duck species.



Steller's Sea-eagle (Photo: David Stickney)

The raptor highlights included the Steller's Sea-eagle (the largest eagle in the world and only found around the Sea of Okhotsk) including some birds on nests, the Northern Goshawk (unfortunately deceased), and the White-tailed Sea-eagle which is widespread across Northern Russia and Europe.

Next, a brief mention of some of the many passerines. Much time was spent on searches aided by call playbacks where appropriate. Finds included the widely distributed Nutcracker, Olive-

backed Pipit, the distinctive Siberian Rubythroat, Narcissus Flycatcher (which breeds only in the visited region), Oriental Greenfinch, Long-tailed Rosefinch and Swinhoe's Robin.

It would be remiss not to mention the mammal sightings, which included Steller's Sea-lion, Harbour Seal, Spotted Seal, and several whale species including the Fin Whale, Killer Whale (seen most days with as many as 30 on one day) and Sperm Whale which, like most whales, has most of its body mass underwater when surfaced.

David concluded his talk on a fiery note with photos of a 'perfect' volcano with a small cone inside the symmetric major cone and of a coastal eruption of red-hot magma, reminders of the geological turbulence of a fascinating region which few of us are likely to visit.

Phil Rayment



## Excursion to Uralla Reserve 29.10.2016

This was an ideal day at Uralla with a slight breeze and the temperature reaching 24°C so the insect life was abundant, many plants were in spring flowering (Musk Daisy-bush, Snowy Daisy-bush, Common Cassinia, Shiny Cassinia and Blanket-leaf in particular) and the birds were very active.

We found David had arrived early and done a lap of Uralla (Bullocky and Donaldsons tracks) and had spotted some 20 bird species. While waiting for other members to arrive, we looked at a Koala David had found and then a Grey Currawong resting nearby. This bird was new to Uralla and proved to be the only new bird species for the day. At 10am, after checking out the new Uralla Information Board, we started around the Bullocky and Donaldsons tracks in the anti-clockwise direction. Ken was soon spotting many plants, both on the Flora of Uralla List and not on the list, which meant I was in charge of ticking them off or trying to write down Latin plant names.

Along Bullocky track on the drier, northern-facing slopes of Uralla, dominated by Brown Stringybark and Messmate, wildflowers and shrubs in flower were abundant including: Bronze Caladenia, Cobra Greenhood, Tall Sun-orchid, Pink Fingers, Handsome Flat-pea and Common Apple-berry. Nearby were Lewin's Honeyeaters, Brown-headed Honeyeaters and Yellow-faced Honeyeaters. Turning onto Donaldsons track, the slope faces towards the south and the vegetation consists of damp forest and rainforest. Here ferns were plentiful including Fishbone Water-fern, Strap Water-fern and Sickle Fern, as well as Pennyworts, Elderberry Panax and the vines Clematis and Wonga. Mountain Grey Gum, Austral Mulberry, Victorian Christmas Bush and Muttonwood *Myrsine howittiana* were the larger trees and plants. It was encouraging to see many young Muttonwoods along the track. These warm temperate rainforest trees should be protected with any ongoing track maintenance.

At the top of Bullocky Track, David heard a Sacred Kingfisher and was in hot pursuit for a viewing. Further along Donaldsons track, some people were lucky enough to get a great view of a Rufous Fantail – certainly many Grey Fantails are seen without ever a Rufous Fantail being sighted. Descending, we found Brown Gerygones in constant movement. We then returned to the carpark for lunch, spotting a Red-browed Finch, numerous Crimson Rosellas and King Parrots.



Exploring Uralla Reserve (Photo: Peter McDonald)

After lunch we walked the Stewart Track (easy access) to check a mint-bush. This proved to be the Round-leaved Mint-bush *Prostanthera rotundifolia* that we concluded had been planted as it was outside its known distribution area, and we also checked that the Koala was still nearby. David had spotted a Tiger Snake below the boardwalk and, on the walk back, Jay and Peter had a quick view of a Copperhead in a hurry.

Jack, being very keen on eucalypts, had on his plant list Mountain Ash *Eucalyptus regnans*. This was very interesting because the Uralla Nature Reserve Management Plan mentions "a small plantation of Mountain Ash, however the location of this has not been identified". We went to look at this small plantation which Jack confirmed were Mountain Ash (four trees approximately 20m tall off Donaldsons Track).

Considering Uralla is a small reserve (44 ha), this was a rewarding day. In summary, 33 bird species (1 new), 3 reptiles (1 new) 76 plant species (13 new) and 1 marsupial were recorded.

Peter McDonald

*\*Full list of new species available in the electronic version of The Naturalist*

### ***Correction to article "Birding around Deniliquin" in the Latrobe Valley Naturalist January – February 2017 Issue No. 588***

The Plains Wanderer is the *only* bird in the family Pedionomidae. Currently it is thought to be most closely related to the seed snipes of South America.

Thanks to Rob Gully for noticing my error.

Julie Parker

## **REPORT ON BUSINESS MEETING 20.02.2017**

### **Finance**

Cash Management Trading Account: \$5,498.63 Term Deposit: \$14,870.23

### **Business Arising, Correspondence & General Business**

- Wendy and Alix will act as 'meeting greeters', welcoming new faces and giving them a brochure.
- Rose will book Moe Library meeting room for the year. March meeting at 7.30pm due to SEANA camp, then revert back to 3pm meetings.
- List of community committee representatives on website has been revised and updated.
- SEANA Management Committee: Phil has been on it for 9 yrs but is willing to nominate for a further term due to his involvement with planning ANN Spring camp 2018 to be held in Victoria.
- Club History and Latrobe Region Nature Guide will be sold at \$5 during SEANA camp.
- Club subscription register set up on Gmail. David Mules and Wendy have access to edit details, other committee members are able to view files and will be notified of changes.
- Photographic competition a huge success. Thanks to Ken, Jay, Baiba, Phil and David for organisation and Alix for publicity.
- SEANA autumn camp 2017: All excursion leaders and facilitators organised, 120 registrants and all pre-booked excursions are full.
- AGM nominations open for President, Vice President no. 1, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer.

### **Conservation matters**

- Vicroads Tyers Rd bridge over Latrobe River: Club declined to be involved in meeting. Irene requested a club member attend a site visit on Wed 8<sup>th</sup> Feb but no one was available.
- Cores and Links: Further to meeting attended by Phil and David, there will be a bus-based tour of the affected region on Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 11am. Club members invited.

## Guest speaker for April

*Conor Wilson*

Conor is a Parks Victoria ranger who manages environmental projects in the Alpine National Park. He will discuss the organisation's ongoing efforts to conserve peatland areas, tackling issues such as poorly-situated tracks, off-road driving and invasive species.



## Guest speaker for May

*Sapphire McMullan-Fisher*

Sapphire is an ecologist with an interest in the conservation of macrofungi and mosses, and their role in our bushlands. She has been involved with the Fungimap project for many years, and is currently working on the conservation of a very rare Gippsland species called Tea-tree Fingers.



*Latrobe Valley Naturalist* is the official publication of the Latrobe Valley Field Naturalist Club Inc. The Club subscription includes the "Naturalist".

Brief contributions and short articles on any aspect of natural history are invited from members of all clubs. Articles, including those covering Club speakers and excursions, would typically be around one A4 side in length, should not exceed 1,000 words, and may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Photos should be sent as an attachment and be a maximum of 1 megabyte in size.

Responsibility for the accuracy of information and opinions expressed in this magazine rests with the author of the article.

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**Deadline for articles to be considered for inclusion in the next issue (May/June): 12 May 2017**

Latrobe Valley Field Naturalist Club Incorporation No. A0005323T  
ISSN 1030-5084 ABN 86 752 280 972

***The Naturalist is generously printed by the office of Russell Northe MLA, Member for Morwell***

**APPENDIX I – List of new species recorded at Uralla Reserve during Club excursion on 29.10.2016**

**Birds**

Grey Currawong *Strepera versicolor*

**Reptiles**

Southern Water-skink *Eulamprus tympanum*

**Plants**

Austral Bugle *Ajuga australis*  
Bronze Caladenia *Caladenia transitoria*  
Veined Helmet-orchid *Corybas diemenicus*  
Shining Pennywort *Hydrocotyle sibthorpioides*  
Downy Ground-fern *Hypolepis glandulifera*  
Burgan *Kunzea* sp.  
Variable Stinkweed *Opercularia varia*  
Shade Pellitory *Parietaria debilis*  
Round-leaved Mint-bush *Prostanthera rotundifolia*  
Tender Brake *Pteris tremula*  
Mountain Greenhood *Pterostylis alpina*  
Leathery Shield-fern *Rumohra adiantiformis*  
Trailing Speedwell *Veronica plebeia*