

## Office bearers

President: David Stickney  
Secretary: Rose Mildenhall  
Treasurer: David Mules  
Publicity Officer: Alix Williams  
Magazine editor: Tamara Leitch  
Conservation Coordinator: Denis Nagle  
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Naturalists Club Inc.  
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## Website

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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



Mountain Gentians *Gentianella muelleriana* ssp. *muelleriana* observed near the summit of Mt Buller during the Club's 2019 Summer Camp (Photo: Baiba Stevens).

## **Upcoming events**

**Botany Group:** Saturday 1 June – Myrtaceae at Jack & Marja's house.

**Bird Group:** Tuesday 4 June – Boolarra area. Meet 9.30am at Rail Trail carpark in Boolarra.

**June general meeting:** Friday 28 June

Birds of Papua New Guinea – David Stickney

**June excursion:** Saturday 29 June – Mt Worth. Meet 10am Moonlight Creek Picnic Area or carpool 9.30am from Fozigobble Café, Yarragon.

**Bird Group:** Tuesday 2 July – Trafalgar area. Meet 9.30am Uralla Reserve gate, Giles Road in Trafalgar.

**Botany Group:** Saturday 6 July – Indoors, looking at local Acacias & Proteaceae. Details TBC.

**July general meeting:** Friday 26 July

Future of Our Forests workshop - DELWP

**July excursion** Saturday 27 July – Edward Hunter Reserve & Moe Botanic Gardens. Details TBC.

## President's Report 2018-19

Thank you for the support you have given me for a further two-year term as your President. This report provides an opportunity to thank the committee, particularly those members who have accepted nominations as office bearers of the Club for a further two-year term. We have a slightly expanded committee, with the Secretary's role split between the Secretary and Assistant Secretary. It has been a time-consuming job that Wendy has managed for 24 years; the sharing of the role between Rose and Wendy is working well and we are grateful to Wendy for her continued contribution. Much of the Club's activity involves responding to enquiries from the public and dealing with authorities and other parties via emails and phone calls; Rose has accepted this challenge in addition to managing our two monthly meetings.

I will also take this opportunity to again thank Jackie for her time as our Conservation Coordinator, a role which she has occupied since 2004, and Alix for her period as our Bird Group coordinator since 2006. The Club is fortunate to have had a smooth transition in both these roles. Denis has accepted the role as Conservation Coordinator at a time when there are so many conservation issues that the Club has become involved with, and Joelle's role in coordinating our Bird Group has got off to a 'flying' start. Finally, thank you to Alix for her continuing role as our Publicity Officer. We are, however, seeking a member who would be interested in representing the Club on the Australian Paper Community Consultative Committee. John Poppins has been a long-standing representative on the committee and has indicated he would like to step down.

I believe our Club is highly respected in the community and our views are taken into account when environmental issues are raised. This provides a broad platform for our incoming Conservation Coordinator. Some of the environmental projects our members have been involved with are:

- Provided support to the Mirboo North community in opposing a VicForests proposal to log a number of coupes near the township by assisting them in conducting plant, bird and nocturnal mammal surveys; the proposed start date for the logging continues to be deferred and will not now happen this year.
- Submitted an objection to the energy-from-waste project at Maryvale Paper Mill.
- Participated in West Gippsland CMA workshops on the proposed environmental flow recommendations for the Latrobe catchment.
- Submission into the use of opera-house yabby nets and impact on the platypus population, supporting the position adopted by the Australian Platypus Conservancy to ban the use of these nets on public and private land.
- Representation on the committee for the Latrobe City proposal to establish a Strzelecki–Alpine Biolink.
- Attended the opening of the new Brataualung Forest Park by the Minister for the Environment. An area of 2300 ha, of the 8000 ha Cores and Links Reserve Agreement, has now been set aside.
- Submitted a response to the draft Victorian Deer Management Strategy.
- Opposed a proposal to excessively widen the road between Traralgon and Tyers, resulting in the removal of up to 50 Strzelecki Gums, which led to a VCAT hearing.
- Supported the Great Latrobe Park concept championed by a number of concerned local residents; the Club will be further briefed at one of our meetings.

A number of our members have been actively involved in these projects and I would like to recognise my fellow Committee and Club members, and others who have represented the Club in one way or another. We thank them for their effort and commitment to help the Club function successfully and contribute towards improved environmental outcomes.

David Stickney

### **Ken Harris: 50 Years of Nature Study**

I enjoyed the talk in November on 'Highlights of 50 years of Nature Study' by one of our most active members, Ken Harris. One hears snippets and anecdotes about others' lives, but it was a pleasure to hear a sequence of Ken's highlights in a very condensed form. Ken has been a major contributor since he joined the Club in 1985, when he first came to the Latrobe Valley, and is one of the Club's Vice Presidents. Since joining the Club, he has led many excursions and has been a foremost source of information on all aspects of natural history. He has an extensive collection of photographs and a prodigious memory, which was evident during his presentation.

Ken's natural history journey started in 1960 with a visit to Ghana, and then Pakistan in 1964. It is hard to imagine the difficulty of getting good photographs in those days because it was a long time before digital cameras and telephoto lenses became commonplace. We are fortunate that Ken had an interest in photography, as well as an interest in natural history, from an early age.



Ken Harris (Photo: David Stickney)

The journey continued to Murmansk in Russia in 1966, Austria in 1967, and then to Iceland in 1967. These trips were dispersed with periods in England, but even there many counties were visited such as Norfolk, Suffolk and Lowestoft, as well as Ayr in Scotland. His photographs of English birds included many rarities which I had not seen in my time in the UK including Red-necked Grebe, White Storks, Nutcracker, Wryneck, an American White-throated Sparrow and a Cream-coloured Courser.

The journey now continued to Australia, starting with a King Penguin in Tasmania, where he first settled in 1973. It was in Tasmania that he took pictures of many marsupials including a potoroo, a short-nosed bandicoot, an albino Brush-tailed Possum and a Leopard Seal, which was a visitor from Antarctica. Even from here there were many other trips, including New Zealand and Japan where he photographed two iconic species: a Kea and a Japanese Macaque.

In 1997 Ken spent a year in Canada on an exchange visit, where his interest in natural history and photography continued. Canada opened up a whole new diversity of different species, particularly the Black Bear and Least Chipmunk in Yellowstone National Park, and Hoary Marmot, Moose and Porcupine in Canada.

Then it was back to Australia, but the trips continued to Ecuador and Galapagos in 2004. Ken's trip to Ecuador was in the Amazon basin on the river Napo and his photographs included the Hoatzin (said

to be the most primitive bird), a Many-banded Aracari and an Ecuadorian Woolly Tarantula. Galapagos is a unique place on the planet made famous by Darwin and his theory of evolution. The islands are dominated by reptiles and birds and Ken showed some of the unique species. The reptiles included the Marine Iguana (the only lizard to feed in the sea), the Land Iguana and, of course, the Galapagos Tortoise. Many of the birds on Galapagos are also endemic including the Waved Albatross and the Flightless Cormorant.

Another unique place Ken visited was Madagascar in 2010. Madagascar is famous for its lemurs and Ken was able to see quite a number, his photographs including the Eastern Grey Bamboo Lemur, and one of the smallest, the Grey-brown Mouse Lemur. Madagascar is also home to the greatest diversity of chameleons and Ken's highlight was the Short-horned Chameleon. It also has some strange geckos which include the Satanic Leaf-tail Gecko. The birds included the Sickle-billed Vanga, which is one representative of a diverse range of birds, and a White-browed Owl, which is in the same genus as our Boobook.



Leopard (Photo: Ken Harris)

Ken had decided to take advantage of his trip to Madagascar with a side trip to South Africa. He showed photographs of several African mammals including the White Rhinoceros, African Elephant, Giraffe and Leopard. The animals in Africa are extensively photographed but nothing compares to the experience of seeing these animals in the wild and being able to photograph them yourself. Some of the bird species photographed were the Secretary Bird (a ground-dwelling bird of prey),

Yellow-billed Hornbill and a Red-crested Korhaan (related to a Bustard).

Back in Australia, Ken showed some photographs of plants, insects and birds. Plants taken in his favourite park – Morwell National Park – included the Butterfly Orchid (named after its shape, not the pollinating vector) and a Coral Tooth Fungus.

No talk from Ken would be complete without photographs of some moths and lacewings. The moths included the Triangle Hawk-moth and the Mistletoe Emperor, and lacewings shown were the Angular-wing Lacewing and a possible new species of *Austroberothella*, a Beaded Lacewing.

It is difficult to capture one's life in a short presentation, but Ken accomplished it very well by only including one or two pictures at each destination. Each picture was annotated with the species, date and location, demonstrating the work Ken had put into the preparation of the talk at quite short notice. Thank you, Ken, for your insights and revealing your life of natural history.

David Stickney

### **Excursion to Baths Road Reserve 24.11.2018**

On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November, 13 club members gathered in Mirboo North's Baromi Park carpark to explore the Baths Road Reserve. It was good to have local resident Grace Adamo from the Friends Group join us for the morning. Ken Harris, as ever, was an invaluable guide to the great diversity of plants to be seen there.

The reserve is on 13 hectares of Crown land that in 1991 was declared 'Land for Wildlife', and the South Gippsland Shire took over responsibility for its management. The original Friends of Baths Road Reserve was active for a few years from its formation in 1999, and was later reactivated from 2015. A launch gathering in November 2017 celebrated the reorganisation of the track network and installation of new signage and interpretation displays.

We headed down the Wildflower Track from the southern entrance below the carpark, observing Messmate *Eucalyptus obliqua* to be a preponderant eucalypt. Shrubs initially seen included Elderberry *Panax Polyscias sambucifolia*, Common Apple-berry *Billardiera scandens* and Prickly Moses *Acacia verticillata*. Later, a second Acacia – Varnish Wattle *A. verniciflua* – was found; its leaves have two main veins. Small trailing shrubs included Black-anther Flax-lily *Dianella revoluta* and Trailing Ground-berry *Acrotriche prostrata*.

Near the stream, the headwaters of the Little Morwell River, we joined the King Fern Track, finding a variety of ferns including (of course) the barrel-shaped pedestals of King Fern *Todea barbara*, Hard Water-fern *Blechnum watsii*, Fishbone Water-fern *Blechnum nudum*, Screw Fern *Lindsaea linearis*, and Scrambling Coral Fern *Gleichenia microphylla*. Both Rough Tree-fern *Cyathea australis* and Soft Tree-fern *Dicksonia antarctica* are found in the reserve too. The tall, red fruiting stem of *Gahnia sieberiana* was a spectacular sight. Wiry Bauera *Bauera rubioides* was in flower and we noted Tall Sundew *Drosera auriculata* and Butterfly Flag *Diplarrena moraea* along the path.



*Centella cordifolia* (Photo: Phil Rayment)

From the swimming pool area, we climbed back through the reserve, using the Pool and Wildflower Tracks. Ken pointed out the heart-shaped leaves of *Centella cordifolia*. Two species of Clematis, Mountain Clematis *Clematis aristata* and Forest Clematis *C. glycinoides*, were in flower in the reserve. Prominent, as we arrived back at the southern edge of the park, was a large Musk Daisy-bush *Olearia argophylla* in flower; this is Victoria's largest *Olearia* species.



Musk Daisy-bush (Photo: Phil Rayment)

A variety of orchids was distributed through the reserve. We saw the flower spike of a Small Tongue-orchid *Cryptostylis leptochila*, a good few Potato-orchids *Gastrodia procera*, the Common Bird-orchid *Chiloglottis valida*, and Tall Sun-orchids *Thelymitra media* in bud. A Tall Greenhood *Pterostylis melagramma* near the swimming pool had finished flowering.

The birds enjoyed the morning, with David Mules noting in particular a pair of Common Bronzewing.

At morning's end, we headed down to the Lyrebird Forest Walk for lunch together. Some participants then completed a circuit walk there, and found the other so-called Potato-orchid, *Gastrodia sesamoides*, in flower; this species is less robust than *G. procera*, having a bent-over flowering stem tip. A Rufous Fantail was inadvertently flushed from its nest located in a Hazel Pomaderris overhanging the creek along the Lyrebird Track. As the field nats watched from a distance, the bird reappeared and quite quickly moved back and settled on the nest. Ken moved

quietly forward, with a couple of other people, and was able to get close enough to take a photo using his 100mm lens without disturbing the sitting bird.

All in all, a very pleasant way to spend the Victorian election day!

Philip Rayment



Rufous fantail on its nest  
(Photo: Ken Harris)

## **CLUB SUMMER CAMP 2019 – Part 1**

Twenty-four members and friends converged on Merrijig on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> February for the Club's summer camp visiting Mt Buller, Mt Stirling and the Howqua River region. Most stayed at the Merrijig Lodge, which provided good accommodation for a group such as ours – its swimming pool was welcome given the hot weather in the valley of the Delatite River over the three days. The lodge had a spacious dining area, kitchen and elevated deck for our use. The nearby Hunt Club Hotel provided a convenient venue for a group dinner on the Sunday evening. We would have had a few more members take part in the camp had it not been for bushfire threats, sadly all too common nowadays in late summer.

More detailed write-ups of particular sites follow this overview, but to set the scene we began by exploring the Mt Buller summit region on the Saturday. We began at the Alpine Resort Visitor Centre before driving the short distance to the summit carpark for the steep climb to the exposed rocky summit. Most of us then followed part of the Summit Nature Walk, which turned out to offer good alpine and sub-alpine plant diversity. Following lunch together, sheltering from the sun and wind back in the Visitor Centre, participants headed in various directions. Some attempted to walk part of the Little Mt Buller Trail, but were defeated by a lack of clarity in the Summer Walks brochure and the punishing gradients of the track from the end of The Avenue in the village. Quite a few of us finished the day with a little birding in the attractive reserve on the Delatite River in Mirimbah.

Sunday morning saw us head for the Mt Stirling area. The logical base for short walks is the forested Telephone Box Junction (TBJ) which has basic facilities including a small café and information centre. Here we obtained a pocketable Mt Stirling Trail Map, which proved more reliable than the regional walks brochure mentioned above. Most of us spent the morning on the attractive 5 km Woollybutt Loop track which starts and finishes at TBJ and features the Razorback Hut, a cattlemen's hut built in 1953. This track crosses the Circuit Rd at King Saddle after approximately 3 km, which allowed some folk to rest there while the keener walkers returned to TBJ to bring the cars up for lunch together in the spacious picnic shelter. We again headed various ways after lunch, with some driving on to Craig's Hut, approximately 19 km further along Circuit Rd, others returning to

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TBJ for more short walks and birding, and a couple tackling part of the Wombat Drop track from the saddle.

On Monday morning we headed south-east from Merrijig, following Howqua Track for about 17 km to the Sheeppark Flat picnic and camping area on the Howqua River. The 3 km return Howqua Hills Heritage Walk from there to Frys Flat was rewarding, with the large Frys Hut set in an attractive treescape. Some of us enjoyed one of the birding highlights of the camp – a Sacred Kingfisher that obligingly perched on a horizontal branch over the river for several minutes. Later in the morning, Tunnel Bend proved worth seeing for its diversion tunnel about 3 km further upstream. Around lunchtime, some folk headed back up to the relative cool weather of TBJ or Craig's Hut, or else spent a leisurely afternoon strolling the Plain Creek forest walking track from Carters Mill reserve on the Delatite River near Sawmill Settlement.

Philip Rayment

### **Summit Walk (south section) – Saturday morning**

When we arrived at Mt Buller Village, it was very chilly with swirling mist, so all the cold weather gear we had wisely packed was put on over our summer excursion clothes. After checking details of walks in the Visitor Centre we drove up to the Summit Walk carpark and climbed up the short track to the 1805 m summit. Despite the mist, the 360 degree views of mountains and farmland below were spectacular, and the fire spotter looked cosy in the attractive stone building which we sheltered behind. Low vegetation was mostly made up of Alpine Hovea *Hovea montana*, Alpine Shaggy-pea *Podolobium alpestre* and good patches of Mountain Celery or Snow Aciphyll *Aciphylla glacialis* in flower. The many Mountain Plum-pines *Podocarpus lawrencei* were male plants with their 'cones' but a few female plants were found with a couple of the bright red succulent seeds. The Cut-leaf Daisy *Brachyscome multifida* grew amongst the stones on the path, surprising some that it was a native.



Mountain plum pine male (left) and female (right) (Photos: Baiba Stevens)

I kept muddling my names as we had Podocarpus, Podolepis and Podolobium all growing up there. I found a website [davesgarden.com/guides/botanary/](http://davesgarden.com/guides/botanary/) to help. 'Podo' means foot so Podocarpus is 'foot seed' as the seeds are stalked, Podolobium is 'foot pod' as the pods are stalked and Podolepis is 'foot scale' – presumably the scales are stalked? I couldn't work that one out.

The next walk was the Summit Nature Walk, which some people did in part but a few stalwarts completed. Glorious views towards the south were had the entire way as the alpine vegetation was low. Mountain Gentians *Gentianella muelleriana ssp. muelleriana* were flowering amongst the low blue-green tufts of snow grass *Poa sp.* carpeting the ground. Amongst the snow grass were also Australian caraway *Oreomyrrhis eriopoda* no longer in flower but with many seed heads, several specimens of the buttercup *Ranunculus graniticola* also in seed, silver daisy *Celmisia sp.*, Alpine Podolepis *Podolepis robusta*, the silvery-leaved Silver Fireweed *Senecio gunnii* and the low growing Alpine Woodruff *Asperula pusilla* with its tiny white four-petalled flowers. Beside the track, Baiba spotted a cushion plant which, at first glance, very much looked like Twin-flower Knawel *Scleranthus*

*biflorus*. A few days later however, after enlarging the photo taken and checking the description and photos in VicFlora, we think it may have in fact been *Scleranthus singuliflorus*, as there were only single heads on the stems. Ken Harris thinks it was neither, as he believes he could see white petals inside the opening buds. Another low-growing plant near the edge of the path was identified from its leaves and growth habit as Alpine Rice-flower *Pimelea alpina*. The taller *Pimelea ligustrina* was also noted.



Ken photographing moths (Photo: Baiba Stevens)

An interesting find was a daisy with large yellow flowers, amidst the white-flowered Yarrow, which Ken knew was Alpine Groundsel *Senecio pectinatus* var. *major*. Considering that Yarrow *Achillea millefolium* is a weed in the alps, introduced as food for livestock, the swathes of white flowers did make a pretty picture against the background of blue mountains in the distance. Another positive was that the white Yarrow flowers were an attraction to moths and butterflies, very pleasing for Ken who took great delight in photographing them. One beautiful brown and orange specimen was the Small Radiating Carpet moth *Chrysolarentia chrysocyma*.

The plan for our small group was to eventually deviate from the Summit Nature Walk, climb Little Mt Buller, and then return back to the Nature Walk. However, after reaching a small, open woodland of Snow Gums *Eucalyptus pauciflora*, we realised we had missed the path and came to the conclusion that the map given to us by the Mt Buller Visitor Centre was incorrect in many aspects. The woodland gave us some respite from the sun, which had appeared after the morning fog, and introduced us to some new plants not seen on the track before. The Alpine Mint-bush *Prostanthera cuneata* only had a few flowers, but we were entertained by a green katydid from the genus *Tinzeda*, with white stripes and very long, thin antennae, that was sunning itself on top of the bush. Later we encountered another brown-winged katydid that at first glance did not appear to be very exciting, but when provoked it revealed a black and red body with stunning, fluorescent blue stripes – this was the male Mountain Katydid, *Acripeza reticulata*, causing many 'oohs' and 'ahs'!



Mountain Katydid displaying warning colours (Photo: Baiba Stevens)

Opposite the mint-bush was a specimen of the red-stemmed Mountain Pepper *Tasmannia lanceolata*, or maybe it was Alpine Pepper *Tasmannia xerophila*; these two species seem to be hard to distinguish. Growing near the pepper were Alpine Orites *Orites lancifolia* with their boat-shaped seed pods starting to form, Dusty Daisy-bush *Olearia phlogopappa* ssp. *flavescens* and the Kerosene Bush *Ozothamnus cupressoides*. Further along, under protection of the Snow Gums, were multitudes of iridescent blue stars of the Royal Bluebell *Wahlenbergia gloriosa* making a beautiful display in competition with Yam Daisies *Microseris lanceolata*. Later, on the edge of the track, Baiba spotted an unusual plant that seemed to have leaves similar to *Euphrasia*, but with flower seed heads on long stalks. This was eventually identified in fact as *Euphrasia lasianthera*, which has lilac-coloured flowers on long stems; it would have been very pretty to see in flower.

Continuing along the path beside the dam and under several chairlifts, back to the middle carpark, the mountain views across yellow drifts of *Coronidium monticola* did not disappoint us. We could now see Little Mt Buller in cross-section and realised that some of us would have struggled to reach the saddle and climb the steep incline.



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## Summit Walk (north section) - Saturday afternoon

On reaching the carpark at the Arlberg Hotel, instead of waiting for lifts or walking back into the Mt Buller township, some of us decided to continue along the northern section of the Summit Nature Walk.

Initially, the track meandered through an alpine grassland of *Poa* species and possibly introduced grasses planted for the ski runs. A short way along the track was the Spurs Restaurant, but of course it was closed, so no cappuccinos today. Passing to the left of the Burnt Hut reservoir, the narrow walking path provided us with glorious views across the high country ranges towards Mt Cobbler. If you looked carefully you could see the outline of a face which was once known as Indian Head.

Approaching the boardwalk, the vegetation changed to a small woodland of Snow Gums with a dense shrubby understorey of heath species, and several plants we had not seen along the southern section of the Nature Walk in the morning, including a mystery species that Wendy S and I, after some research, might be *Leionema phyllicifolium*. Common plants in section were Mountain Plum-pine, Swamp heath *Epacris paludosa*, Dusty Daisy-bush, Alpine Shaggy-pea with its hairy seed pods and *Acrothamnus hookeri* which used to be in the genus *Leucopogon*. Much to Ken's surprise, there were two species of Baeckea growing in close proximity, Alpine Baeckea *Baeckea gunniana* and Mountain Baeckea *B. utilis*. These two species can be distinguished by their flower structure; Alpine Baeckea has smaller flowers with 4-6 stamens, and leaves crowded around the stem, while Mountain Baeckea flowers have 8-10 stamens. It was lovely to see a few Triggerplants *Stylidium armeria* still in flower, their bright purple flowers complementing the greens of the heath plants. The yellow flowers of Fireweed Groundsel *Senecio linearifolius* also brightened the woodland.



Alpine Baeckea (Photo: Baiba Stevens)

The dense vegetation of this woodland provides shelter and protection to foraging animals, including the Mountain Pygmy-possum *Burramys parvus*, which is the only native mammal that lives in the alpine environment above the treeline. Unfortunately, the population of this mammal is continuing to decline.



Fireweed Groundsel and Snow Gums along the northern part of the Nature Summit Walk (Photo: Baiba Stevens)

Continuing past the Snow Gum woodland, the low dense vegetation was dominated by Alpine Hovea and snow grass with the occasional Kerosene Bush breaking the monotony of the olive Hovea leaves. As it was already reasonably late in the afternoon when we reached the carpark, a decision was made to return to Merrijig and not stop at the Mt Buller township. Little did we realise that this was a drastic mistake, as the temperature climbed as we drove down the mountain and it was unbearably hot back at camp!

Baiba Stevens

## REPORT ON BUSINESS MEETING 20.05.2019

### Finance

Cash Management Trading Account: \$3,503.86      Term Deposit: \$16,560.48

### Business Arising, Correspondence & General Business

- Club mugs: No green mugs are available any more. Motif can be solid colour on white mug (\$6.85), or multi-coloured on white mug (\$10.95). It was decided to order mugs with dark green motif and writing. Minimum order is 6 dozen.
- Digitising plant lists: Wendy visited Ken Smith. He is pleased to take on the task of writing out information about the lists.
- PA system: Matt will provide costing for more effective lapel microphone.
- New arrangements for setting up and putting away chairs and equipment at general meetings trialled at April club night. The Vice President asked during the meeting for two volunteers to put away equipment at the end of the night and two to arrive early the following month to set up.
- After our April general meeting the urn was left on, but fortunately had not quite boiled dry by the time the congregation arrived for Sunday service.
- SEANA Spring Camp 4-7 October: Organised by Castlemaine club. First circular has gone out.
- David S recalled Latrobe City's invitation for him leading a spotlight walk at Crinigan Bushland Reserve. He will check if the idea is still current and if so will do reconnaissance then contact the council to arrange a date.
- Gippsland Railway upgrade: People circulated information about consultation project. Included in the upgrade will be possible changes to drainage of Morwell River. Rose contacted the project people to request the Club be kept informed about proposals regarding this aspect.
- Club Spring Camp in Kerang, 18 - 21 October 2019: Wendy has started looking at accommodation options. There are two caravan parks in the locality.
- Latrobe City grant round opening later this year. Joelle proposed applying for a telescope for the Bird Group. We have decided to support her application.

### Conservation Matters

- Dawson Railway Reserve signage: Ken H circulated copy of draft sign design, created by Jay. There are some edits and corrections to do but in principle we were very impressed with the design.
- Hazelwood mine rehabilitation: Rose responded to invitation from Rae Mackay, LV Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner, asking if talk from him would be possibility for our Club's 2020 program. Rae's staff will get back to us before our planning meeting in October.
- Post-bushfire roadside tree removal in Budgerie-Yinnar South area: Environmental Justice Australia has written to DELWP on behalf of a Yinnar South resident, asking them to 'please explain', however no response has yet been received.
- Ken H, Matt and David M went nothing in the burnt area of Morwell National Park at the start of May and recorded similar numbers of species as at that spot three years earlier, however many were different species and 11 were entirely new species for the park. The few banksias that were in the park appear to have been bulldozed or burned. Latrobe City have offered to source local seed of the same species and fund the growing of them, for later planting in the park.
- Mitch Smith from Sale & District Field Nats requested that, if our Club or members have plant lists for Holey Plains State Park, they could share them with the Sale FN Club, which is undertaking post-bushfire monitoring in the park.
- Gippsland Biodiversity Forum 'Facing the challenges' Friday 17 May 2019 at Federation Uni in Churchill: Attended by Ken Harris and Phil Rayment, along with around 100 other people from a wide range of organisations. There were some interesting talks but not a cohesive thread - it was more a collection of examples of environmental studies and work.
- The Victorian Nature Photography Group camped locally last weekend and visited Morwell National Park one day, guided by Ken H and Matt. David S and David M also addressed them one evening about local birds.

## Guest speaker for June

*David Stickney*

Our Club's President will speak about his recent birding trip to the highlands of Papua New Guinea. New Guinea is the second largest island in the world after Greenland and the avifauna is one of the richest and most diverse. David's talk will be accompanied by a selection of his stunning photographs, featuring several of the 42 resident species of Birds of Paradise.



## Guest speaker for July

*Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)*

July's meeting will be a workshop discussing forest values and management to inform DELWP's Future of Our Forests program. This program aims to modernise the state's forest management approach and renew the Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs), which are plans for sustainable management and conservation of Australia's forests agreed between state and federal governments.



*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.

Contributions should be addressed to:

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**Deadline for articles to be considered for inclusion in the next issue (July/August): 8 July 2019**

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