



The Clematis

The Quarterly Newsletter of the
Bairnsdale & District Field Naturalists Club Inc. A0006074C
P.O. Box 563, Bairnsdale Victoria 3875 www.bairnsdalefieldnaturalists.com.au

Issue No. 119

Autumn 2019

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© Ken D Russell

Gang-gang Cockatoo

Photo by Ken Russell

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CORRESPONDENCE TO: The Secretary, P.O. Box 563, Bairnsdale 3875

www.bairnsdalefieldnaturalists.com.au

The Clematis is printed and supported by the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning

MEETINGSGeneral meetings take place at:

The Noweyung Centre,
84 Goold Street, Bairnsdale
as per program at 7.30pm *sharp*

Committee meetings take place at:

members homes as per
program at 4.00pm

THE CLEMATIS

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

SUBSCRIPTION FEES 2019

Single membership	\$30
Family membership	\$45
Mid-year fee (new members only)	\$15

Subscriptions can be paid to the Treasurer at meetings or
excursions or by EFT or cheque by downloading a Membership
Application form from our web site:

www.bairnsdalefieldnaturalists.com.au

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- To further the awareness and study of all branches of natural history within the East Gippsland community through field excursions, regular surveys, specialist guest speakers and publications.
- To observe and strengthen the laws for the preservation and protection of indigenous flora, fauna, habitat and important geological features.
- To promote the formation and preservation of National and State Parks and Reserves.
- To collaborate with other groups and agencies with similar environmental interest.

LIBRARY INFORMATION - ask a committee member
If you would like to borrow a book.

- Books are generally borrowed for one month - however you can write on the sign-out sheet if you wish to have it longer.
- Should any library materials need maintenance, please make a committee member aware of same.
- If you wish to recommend a book, this can be done by writing a short recommendation for the Clematis. This information could be from our library books or from other books that you believe our library could look at purchasing.

FIELD TRIPS

It is your responsibility to contact the coordinator of each field trip to notify them of intention to participate.

The coordinator will notify you if the trip has to be cancelled due to adverse weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances.

Please take note of safety procedures in your Bairnsdale & District Field Naturalists Club Inc. 'RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY' booklet. This can be downloaded from our web site.

RULES TO OBSERVE DURING FIELD TRIPS

- Excursions are cancelled on days of TOTAL FIRE BAN.
- Participants to keep a visual on the car in front and behind.
- When making a turn, give signal, and stay at intersection until following car has also turned.
- If separated from other cars, stop, and stay with your car. Other members will return to find you.
- The Car Pooling Cost Calculator is used to assist drivers and car pool passengers to share fuel costs.

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY FOR BUSH WALKS

Walks vary in distance from 8 to 14 km.

Easy: Flat, good firm track.

Moderately easy: Mostly flat, track in good to fair condition.

Moderate: May be undulating, track in good to fair condition.

Moderately Difficult: May be some steep sections, track may be rough in places.

Difficult: May have long steep sections, track may be non-existent at times.

Contact the leader of the walk for a rating if it's not included in the program.

CONTACTS for Field Trips

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PROGRAMME March to June 2019

Date	Activity	Time	Meeting Place	Destination	Subject/Rated	Leader/Speaker
MARCH						
Frid 15th	General meeting	7.30pm	Noweyung Centre		Development of Eastwood	Ray Hack
Sun 17th	Excursion	9.00am 9.45am	Bridge Club Nowa Nowa	Cape Conran		James Turner
Sun 24th	Bushwalk	9.00am 9.30am	Bridge Club Paynesville Ferry	Raymond Island	Easy	Noel Williamson
APRIL						
Thurs 11 th	Comm. Meeting (if required)	4.00pm	Margaret Regan's home			
Sun 14 th	Excursion	9.00am 9.30am	Bridge Club Bruthen	Upper Little River, Ensay North		James Turner
Sun 28 th	Bushwalk	9.00am 9.30am	Bridge Club Forest Tech	Mississippi Creek to the quarry	Easy	Noel Williamson
MAY						
Sun 5 th	Junior Group	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	Vicki Fraser
Thurs 9 th	Comm. meeting	4.00pm	Noel Williamson's home			
Frid 17 th	General meeting	7.30pm	Noweyung Centre		Pelican monitoring on the Gippsland Lakes	Deb Sullivan – Birdlife East Gippsland
Sat 25 th	Fungimap Talk	TBA	St Mary's Hall		Putting Gippsland fungi on the map	
Sun 26 th	Fungi walk/workshop	9.00am to 12.30	TBA	Fairy Dell		
JUNE						
Sun 2 nd	Junior Excursion	TBA	TBA	TBA		Vicki Fraser
Thurs 13 th	Comm. Meeting (if required)	4.00pm	Jen Wilkinson's home			
Sun 23 rd	Excursion	9.00am	Bridge Club	Bullumwaal area +	historical walk and talk by Phil Large	Pauline Stewart
Sun 30 th	Bushwalk	9.00am	Bridge Club	Fairy Dell area	Moderate	Noel Williamson

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It has been a diabolical summer characterised early on by brief rain episodes in some locations where we were able to see good plant growth. This was followed by some really severe heat and dry thunder storms as autumn arrived with vast areas of the mountains around us now burnt or still on fire. Also, we have now returned to severe drought across the board.

James Turner our Botanical Co-ordinator has done a reconnaissance in the local area for possible excursion sites. He reports that it is very dry and very dusty everywhere with impassable tracks due to deep loose sand. Most waterholes are dry and there are practically no birds; even the forest birds are very quiet. Whilst this doesn't auger well for our excursion programme we will continue to seek out places of interest and let you know directly if there is a change to the excursion locations documented in the Clematis.

It is not all gloom and doom however, following those brief respites James, together with some Orbst/Marlo members and Bill Kosky our member from Melbourne travelled into far East Gippsland looking for summer orchids around Mt Drummer and in remote country on the lower Wingan River where they found a new threatened orchid population -the Bonnet Orchid (*Cryptostylis erecta*) that had not been known in that area before.

Another exciting find was a patch of Curled Leek Orchid (*Prasophyllum retroflexum*) at Timbarra Plain. This is only the second location of this species known in Victoria. The other site is a fenced area in the nearby Nunniong Plain. Well done guys.

And now it is autumn and I want to close with a wish list. I wish that:

We will not get any more severe heat or equinox gale force winds to exacerbate the bush fires.

We get an early and substantial autumn break.

Margaret Regan continues to recover well at home following hip surgery and two months rehabilitation.

Those of you who haven't renewed your membership subscription for the year will do so at your earliest opportunity which will

Make My Day!

Cheers

Pat McPherson

President

From the Editor,

A thank you to Ken Russell, Birdlife East Gippsland for allowing us to include his bird photos in The Clematis.

I have included a few photos from our file by past member John Drinkwater and also the late Fran Bright.

Also,

please note that 2019 subscriptions were due at the start of this year. If you would like to renew your membership to receive future copies of the Clematis go to page 2 for details.



Bonnet Orchid *Cryptostylis erecta*

Photo by John Drinkwater

BENTLEYS PLAIN AND TIMBARRA NORTH PLAIN - Sunday 13th January 2019

By Jennifer Wilkinson

At an elevation of about 1300m, the mountain air felt fresh and cooling as we stepped out of our vehicles at Bentleys Plain picnic area. Recent thunderstorms had kept the forest reasonably green although as we headed down the board-walk on the Bentleys Creek Walk, the area was not even slightly damp.



Bentleys Creek

Photo by Jennifer Wilkinson

Most impressive in the way of wildflowers all along the walk was the plethora of pinkish-white lacy heads of Alpine Trachymene, *Trachymene humilis*, which literally carpeted the ground wherever we went. While the swampy area at the start of the boardwalk was dry, there was enough soil moisture to sustain the leathery rounded foliage of Mountain Water-lily, *Nymphoides montana*, and the dwarf white-flowered buttercup, *Ranunculus millanii*, the starry yellow flowered River Buttercup, *Ranunculus inundatus*, and Marsh Daisy, *Brachyscome radicans*.



River Buttercup *Ranunculus inundatus*

Photo by Jennifer Wilkinson



Alpine Trachymene *Trachymene humilis*

Photo by Jennifer Wilkinson





Alpine Podolepis *Podolepis robusta*

Photo by Jen Wilkinson



Alpine Podolepis

Photo by Fran Bright

Completing the wildflower wonderland amongst the Trachymene were scatterings of little white to pink daisies, *Brachyscome scapigera*, yellow stars of Golden Weather-glass, *Hypoxis hydrometrica*, delicately cupped blue flowers of Slender Speedwell *Veronica gracilis* hidden amongst the grasses together with wispy sprays of soft pink Vanilla lily, *Arthropodium milliflorum*, and occasional stems of Willow-herb, *Epilobium billardierianum* subsp. *hydrophilum*, noted for the length of the ovary which splits open three ways, dispersing its seeds and curling back as they dry. More robust flowers noted along the Walk were the shaggy yellow daisy-flowered Alpine Podolepis, *Podolepis robusta* also called Mountain lettuce by the old-time cattlemen in the high country. Who knows, maybe it was a handy snack, certainly the leaves in the rosette look large and tender. The orangey pointed buds and golden flowers of Alpine Everlasting, *Xerochrysum subundulatum* were plentiful as was the wiry stemmed Scaly Buttons, *Leptorhynchos squamatus* and the tiny leafed scrambling Delicate Bush-pea, *Pultenaea tenella*.

Also noted along the Bentleys Creek Walk were scrambling to shrubby Alpine Baeckea, *Baeckea gunniana* dotted with bright

white tiny flowers, and amongst the grasses a few specimens of Alpine Milkwort *Conosperma retusum*, and a scattering of Swamp Starwort, *Stellaria angustifolia*.

As expected in alpine meadows, hidden amongst the needle foliage of *Hakea microcarpa* were various members of the Apiaceae family, a group of celery or carrot like plants which have tiny flowers on radiating umbrella-like stalks, or umbel. Most prevalent was Mountain Aciphyll, *Aciphylla simplicifolia* with its thread-like foliage and radiating seedheads. A surprising find was a usually quite rare species sometimes known as wild caraway or Slender Gingidia, *Gingidia harveyana*. James said it was unusual to find this plant in such abundance. It has fine thread-like leaves and tiny white flowers many of which had seeded, and we kept finding more and more so it seems it was a good season for *Gingidia*. And of course there were orchids - *Prasophyllum alpestre/suttonii* and *Pterostylis monticola* and of great interest we found Leek-orchid, *Prasophyllum* 'Nunningong'.



Leek-orchid *Prasophyllum* 'Nunningong'
Photo by Dianne Weir



Surrounding the plain was open forest, mostly Mountain Gum, *Eucalyptus dalrympleana*, Mountain Grey Gum, *Eucalyptus cypellocarpa*, Snow Gum, *Eucalyptus pauciflora* and Black Sallee, *Eucalyptus stellulata*.

Energised after a relaxing lunch we moved on along Bentley Road turning into Nunnet Road, a wonderful shady drive beneath forest giants and treasures of the rainforest understorey. James mentioned that there could be a few orchids along the road embankment. Whoops, stop everyone, there's some greenhoods came the call over the radio, so eyes peeled, we got out and just as well we did for all along the road were Cinnamon Bells, *Gastrodia procera*, the stem of which is quite sturdy holding its flowers up high. These orchids are large and completely cinnamon coloured. Sometimes they are called potato orchids after the large tubers which once upon a time were a valuable food source. The more we looked the more cinnamon bells we found, along with Derwent Speedwell, *Veronica derwentiana* and generous stands of *Lomatia fraseri* which was flowering profusely.



Cinnamon Bells *Gastrodia procera*
Photos by Dianne Weir

More greenhood orchids too, *Pterostylis decurva* and *Pterostylis monticola* amongst purple flowerheads of the delightful albeit ubiquitous non-native groundcover, Self-heal, *Prunella vulgaris*.



Summer Greenhood *Pterostylis decurva*
Photo by Dianne Weir

Thelymitra cyanea were prizes amongst the thickets of Gunn's Coral Heath, *Epacris gunnii*. Dotted around in the spongy covering of sphagnum moss and nests of tiny ants, were Eyebright, *Euphrasia collina* subsp.1, not previously recorded from Nunniong, a small white buttercup, *Ranunculus millanii*, the small white-flowering Sundew, *Drosera peltata* and a sturdy lilac flowering daisy once named Erigeron but now *Pappochroma bellidioides*, although sadly the only specimens I could find were finished flowers.

We were all pretty weary as we returned to the cars, not so much after the walking but because the heat was intense and any semblance of breeze had evaporated so it was into the cars, on with the aircon, and off down the road for a final cuppa.

Plus there were swathes of deep purple Royal Bluebells, *Wahlenbergia gloriosa*.

Continuing along was a stately stand of deep green pyramidal trees rising from a deep gully, Southern Sassafras, *Atherosperma moschatum*. It would have been interesting to get out and take a closer look at these but the dense vegetation wasn't exactly conducive to exploring. Also noted along this road were shrubby thickets of Alpine Shaggy-pea, *Podolobium alpestre* and in more open spaces, the tallish soft yellow everlasting daisy, *Coronidium monticola*.

Further down Nunnet Road just past the Timbarra River lies the real gem in this area, a subalpine plain below the road that James refers to as Timbarra Gardens, and what a wonderland it is. Officially known as Timbarra North Plain, we saw many of the species we'd seen at Bentleys Plain but there were new species also. Large Alpine Leek-orchid, *Prasophyllum sphacelatum* and although finished, flowers of what James assured us were Curled Leek-orchid, *Prasophyllum retroflexum* plus Swan Greenhood, *Pterostylis crassicaulis* and Veined Sun-orchid,



Veined Sun-orchid *Thelymitra cyanea*
Photo by Dianne Weir

Flowering along the roadsides as we drove through the drier areas was *Cassinia aculeata* and Sticky Everlasting, *Ozothamnus thyrsoideus*. The downside to driving through these old forests is the sickening view of logging coups in various stages of annihilation and regrowth. Thankfully on passing a coupe it was back to untouched forest and its awesome forest giants and verdant understorey. At least the area classified as Nunniong Natural Features Scenic Reserve should be safe from logging.

Thank you so much James for a wonderful day.

- Arthropodium milliflorum*** Pale Vanilla-lily
Atherosperma moschatum Southern Sassafras
Baeckea gunniana Alpine Baeckea
Brachyscome radicans Marsh Daisy
Brachyscome scapigera Tufted Daisy
Cassinia aculeata Common Cassinia
Conosperma retusum Alpine Milkwort
Coronidium monticola
Drosera peltata Sundew
Epilobium billardierianum* subsp. *hydrophilum Willow-herb
Eucalyptus cypellocarpa Mountain Grey Gum
Eucalyptus dalrympleana Mountain Gum
Eucalyptus pauciflora Snow Gum
Eucalyptus stellulata Black Sallee
Epacris gunnii Gunn's Coral Heath
***Euphrasia collina* subsp.1** Eyebright
Gastrodia procera Cinnamon Bells
Gingidia harveyana Gingidia
Hakea microcarpa Small-fruit Hakea
Hypoxis hydrometrica Golden Weather-glass
Leptorhynchos squamatus Scaly Buttons
Lomatia fraseri Tree Lomatia
Nymphoides montana Mountain Water-lily
Ozothamnus thyrsoides Sticky Everlasting
Pappochroma bellidioides Violet Fleabane
Podolepis robusta Alpine Podolepis
Podolobium alpestre Alpine Shaggy-pea
Prasophyllum 'Nunniong' Leek-orchid
Prasophyllum alpestri/suttonii Mauve Leek-orchid
Prasophyllum retroflexum Curled Leek-orchid
Prasophyllum sphacelatum Large Alpine Leek-orchid
Prunella vulgaris Self-heal (non-native)
Pterostylis crassicaulis Swan Greenhood
Pterostylis decurva Summer Greenhood
Pterostylis monticola Montane Greenhood
Pultenaea tenella Delicate Bush-pea
Ranunculus millanii Dwarf Buttercup
Ranunculus inundatus River Buttercup
Stellaria angustifolia Swamp Starwort
Thelymitra cyanea Veined Sun-orchid
Trachymene humilis Alpine Trachymene
Veronica derwentiana Derwent Speedwell
Veronica gracilis Slender Speedwell
Wahlenbergia gloriosa Royal Bluebells
Xerochrysum subundulatum Alpine Everlasting



Montane Greenhood *Pterostylis monticola* Photo by Fran Bright

Thank you to Len and Jacque Axen for the following bird list:

Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike
Crescent Honeyeater
Crimson Rosella
Eastern Whipbird
Eastern Yellow Robin
Fan-tailed Cuckoo
Flame Robin on nest
Gang Gang Cockatoo
Grey Currawong
Grey Fantail
Grey Shrike-thrush
Laughing Kookaburra
Olive-backed Oriole

Pied Currawong
Red Wattlebird
Rufous Whistler
Sacred Kingfisher
Silvereye
Superb Fairy-wren
Spotted Pardalote
Striated Pardalote
Yellow-faced Honeyeater
White-eared Honeyeater
White-browed Scrubwren
White-naped Honeyeater
White-throated Treecreeper



Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike
Photo by Ken Russell



Eastern Whipbird

Photo by Ken Russell



BUSH WALK - YEERUNG—DOCK INLET AREA - 24TH February 2019



The bushwalkers heading east along the sandy management track



Goanna



A rest stop on a wooden bridge over a gully

After driving through Cape Conran and over the Yeerung River the bushwalkers then walked east from the closed gate of a management track. The track was very sandy and even though the bush was dry we did encounter a few moist waterways. The Scrambling coral-fern *Gleichenia microphylla* was a stand-out as it lived up to its name by scaling up through other vegetation. Screw fern *Lindsaea linearis* and Slender club-moss *Lycopodium laterale* were also seen. The only shrub seen along the way that was flowering was the Narrow-leaf Geebung *Persoonia linearis*, and causing a bit of excitement a Lace Monitor or commonly known as a Goanna *Varanus varius* was encountered on the track. After reaching Dock Inlet lunch was enjoyed before walking across the sand dune to take-in the beautiful deserted beach with far-reaching ocean views.

The day was hot but a cooling light wind from the ocean made it comfortable for the walkers who managed to clock up 17km.

Thank you to our leader Noel Williamson.

Article and photos by Pauline Stewart



The ocean view over the sand-dune from Dock Inlet

The Newsletter of the Bairnsdale & District

Field Naturalists Club Inc.

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