

Castlemaine Naturalist

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Monthly newsletter of the
Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club Inc.



Meadow Argus butterfly.
Artwork by Jane Rusden

September Meeting Report: Speaker, Jane Rusden

“Art Residency at Witchelina Reserve
Nature Foundation SA & Bimblebox Art and Science Camp”

Combined meeting with Birdlife Castlemaine District

At our September Monthly Meeting, we were taken on a wonderful journey to two properties in outback Australia through the eyes and artwork of Jane Rusden, talented local artist and Birdlife Castlemaine District convenor. Jane first described her time as “artist in residence” at the Witchelina Reserve in central South Australia, between Lyndhurst and Maree. Having just returned from the “Bimblebox Art and Science Camp” in Queensland, she added more insights from this experience into her talk on how she captures the Australian outback landscape and wildlife in her art. Jane arrived at the hall laden with the “tools of her trade” to show us, and displayed examples of her artwork in preparation. With her considerable skills as an artist



The rocky outcrops of northern Witchelina.

backed by a science degree in Zoology and long-term love and observation of birds, including caring for several rescue birds, Jane is well placed to accurately depict the key features and behaviours of birds in her stunning creative works.

The Witchelina Reserve is a large 421,000 ha property previously run as a cattle station, but now owned by the Nature Foundation of SA and managed for conservation. This involves removal of feral animals and weeds such as Buffel Grass, and

several research programs into its flora and fauna including threatened species such as the Thick-billed Grasswren and the Plains Mouse. Once COVID restrictions were eased in 2022, Jane was able to take up her 2-week residency at Witchelina. She was self-contained with her trusty Land Cruiser and small tent. During her talk to us, Jane described “the process” for creating her artwork. She first drove slowly for many kilometers around the property to get the beautiful and diverse desert landscape “under her skin”. The



Jane’s camp and *en plein air* art studio.

northern part of this reserve is very rocky, while in the south there are dunes and sand plains. As she moved around, Jane watched and photographed the birds, and made rough sketches of the landscapes. At camp, she would set up her mobile studio opening her box of paints and unfolding her wrap of brushes. She started by creating an art palate, testing colours to best match the tones of the earth, the sky, tree bark and foliage, grasses etc. She spread her paper out on the ground and applied a background wash of colour. Then she flicked and splashed different colours on to represent the hues of the environment that suited her subject.

Jane described her special techniques for representing texture. With Witchelina having a rather saline environment, she often used a coarse grinder to sprinkle salt on the wetted paper. The salt grains would pull the water with pigment towards them, creating a crusty effect. Another of Jane’s special techniques was to press crumpled clingfilm on to the wet paint, perfect for representing background grasses. Once, the background was finished, Jane would start to draw in a particular bird and other background features, using her photographs and sketches as references. Subjects included the birds of the inland as well as butterflies, ants and leaves. Zebra Finches (zebbies) were a favourite subject.



Jane: “I began by noting the colours I saw around me”.

She stressed the importance of having a story and of careful consideration of the composition. Mostly she made watercolour paintings, but she also used coloured pencils for some subjects and made etchings.

At Bimblebox, the desert upland habitats were different. There were heathlands and woodlands of Bimblebox (Poplar Box) and Ironbark. There were different soil types, with a range of mixes of sand and clay. Again, this 8000 ha property was privately

owned as a nature refuge for conservation, saved from land clearing in 2000. Jane showed us a confronting photograph of the reserve boundary, with beautiful Bimblebox woodland on one side and a monoculture of Buffel Grass on the other. Buffel Grass is a favourite pasture grass for cattle in Queensland but considered a highly invasive weed in adjoining states.

There was a central simple but adequate camp where Jane joined a group of artists, writers and scientists to explore the reserve, and share knowledge and skills in depicting this special environment. Again, Jane showed us many of her stunning photos of the birds and examples of the evolution of her artwork.



An artwork unfolds: Galah reference photo, drawing and first layers of watercolour.

Jane has already held exhibitions of her artwork from Witchelina in Adelaide and we were pleased to hear that she is also exhibiting this and other works in the Falkner Gallery here in Castlemaine. Thanks Jane for sharing your stories and artwork from these beautiful outback places.

All photos and artwork in this article are by Jane Rusden.

Jenny Rolland

September Excursion Report – special double field trip

Saturday 9th September – Private Wildlife Sanctuary

At 3pm on a cold and cloudy Saturday afternoon, a group of nine met at the gates of a private reserve at Barringa, south-west of Ballarat. The owner of the reserve, Roy Pails, has built a predator-proof fence around 32 Ha of grassy woodland and is busy restoring the natural habitat on land that had previously been mined for gold and grazed by sheep.

At the start of our visit we heard from Roy how he had set up the reserve. There was considerable financial outlay and work required to establish the predator-proof fence, a few meters inside the property boundary. The fence is about 3m high, has a skirt of chicken wire at the base and a floppy top. It is also electrified to prevent animals from climbing over. Once the fence had been established it was necessary to remove all foxes, rabbits and feral cats from within the area.

The reserve is now home to most of the marsupials (or their close relatives) that would have once occupied the woodlands of western Victoria (see mammal list below). The mammal population includes various arboreal species such as possums, small mammals such as the Yellow-footed Antechinus and micro-bats that are not constrained by the fence.

We spent a couple of hours walking around the property while the owner described how the property was managed and pointed out the wetlands (former farm dams and a constructed chain of ponds) that are home to water birds and frogs including Growling Grass Frogs. We also looked under tiles that had been used to provide homes for and to monitor some of the smaller reptiles on the property. A highlight was finding a Little Whip Snake, *Suta flagellum*, under one of the tiles. We also saw an Eastern Three-lined Skink, *Acritoscincus duperreysi*, under another tile.



Little Whip Snake, *Suta flagellum*. The orange band across the snout is diagnostic.

One of the striking things about the property was the amount of soil disturbance that had been caused by the bandicoots, bettongs and potoroos. These animals spend much of their time digging for invertebrates, fungi, bulbs and tubers and in the process are continually turning over the topsoil. This action hastens the decomposition of litter. It appears that their action also removes African Weed Orchid, an introduced plant that is spreading rapidly across our region.



The small marsupials spend much of their lives digging for fungi and invertebrates. They can turn over enormous amounts of soil and speed up the decomposition of leaf litter.

After a picnic tea we observed many of the smaller nocturnal mammals that emerged from their hiding places after the sun had set. There were good numbers of these animals visiting the garden and the mown grass near the house and sheds. The group was able to get close looks at Rufous Bettong, Brush-tailed Bettong and Long-nosed Potoroo which are all breeding successfully on the property. These are all species that are now rare or extinct in the wild in Victoria. Southern Brown Bandicoots are also doing well on the property, but are declining within part of their range in south-east Australia and subject to special management in some areas. We also saw smaller numbers of Rufous-bellied Pademelon, now extinct in the wild in Victoria and Red-necked Wallaby which may be declining in western Victoria.



Rufous Bettong once inhabited the grassy plains in northern Victoria.



Long-nosed Potoroo, now rare with a patchy distribution in Victoria.

Photos by Euan Moore.

It was wonderful to see all these small native mammals going about their business and to get some idea of what our bush could be like if there is successful feral animal control across the landscape.

Native mammals on the property (* = re-introduction, *italics* = not seen during visit)

Rufous Bettong*	<i>Sugar Glider</i>
Brush-tailed Bettong*	<i>Common Brush-tailed Possum</i>
Long-nosed Potoroo*	Rufous-bellied Pademelon*
Southern Brown Bandicoot*	<i>Fat-tailed Dunnart*</i>
<i>Yellow-footed Antechinus</i>	<i>Common Dunnart</i>
Swamp Wallaby	Red-necked Wallaby*
<i>Eastern Grey Kangaroo</i> – present in low numbers	<i>Micro-bats of various species</i>

Euan Moore

Sunday 10th September - Clarksdale Bird Sanctuary

BirdLife's Clarksdale Sanctuary was established by Gordon Clarke, whose family farmed the area. Keen on birds since he was about 10, in his later years he realised that the birds he had seen when young had declined significantly due to clearing of the land and intense farming practices. Gordon purchased a number of adjacent blocks of land over time, and with the help of enthusiastic volunteers, replanted with native species (but not just local – many from WA) of trees and shrubs selected to attract birds. The Sanctuary now covers 265 Ha, 120 of which he donated to BOCA (Bird Observers Club of Australia) in 1976, and 145 Ha managed by Trust for Nature. More details are available on the BirdLife Australia website. The list of bird species recorded in the Sanctuary is now over 150.

Four members and two guests joined the six members who had camped overnight at the Sanctuary at 9.30am on the Sunday morning. We were welcomed by Emily Noble, Clarksdale Coordinator (and Ballarat FNC Secretary), with a brief history of the Sanctuary. The excursion started about 1 km north, on the Trust for Nature section where Emily showed us several orchid species, including a group of Mayfly Orchids



Golden Bush-pea, *Pultenaea gunnii*.
Photo: Jenny Rolland



Mayfly Orchid, *Amianthus caudatus*.
Photo: Peter Turner

around the base of a tree. Much of the understory was dominated by the brilliant Golden Bush-pea. After a break for refreshments, Emily led us over the Linton-Piggoreet Rd and around the Bird Paddock loop walk. Many more birds were heard and seen to add to the list for the weekend. The many fine white-trunked Candlebarks, and a small group of Yarra Gum were notable. After a late lunch, it was time to thank Emily for her inspiring guiding around this iconic sanctuary, before heading back to Castlemaine.

Peter Turner

Clarksdale Excursion, Sunday 10th September. Plants in flower, **Trees noted

Common Name	Scientific Name
Austral Bugle	<i>Ajuga australis</i>
Beard-heath, Common	<i>Leucopogon virgatus</i>
Bear's-ears, Austral	<i>Cymbonotus preissianus</i>
Bird-orchid, Common	<i>Chiloglottis valida</i>
**Box, Yellow	<i>Eucalyptus melliodora</i>
Bush-pea, Golden	<i>Pultenaea gunnii</i>
Buttercup, Common	<i>Ranunculus pachycarpus</i>
**Candlebark	<i>Eucalyptus rubida</i>
Coral-pea, Purple	<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>
Creamy Candles	<i>Stackhousia monogyna</i>
Daisy, Yam	<i>Microseris walteri</i>
Early Nancy, Common	<i>Wurmbea dioica</i>
Goodenia, Trailing leaf	<i>Goodenia lanata</i>
Grass-tree, Small	<i>Xanthorrhoea minor</i>
Greenhood, Tall	<i>Pterostylis melagramma</i>
Greenhood, Dwarf	<i>Pterostylis nana</i>
Greenhood, Nodding	<i>Pterostylis nutans</i>
Greenhood, Trim	<i>Pterostylis concinna</i>
**Gum, Yarra	<i>Eucalyptus yarraensis</i>
Hovea, Common	<i>Hovea heterophylla</i>

Milkmaids	<i>Burchardia umbellata</i>
Mistletoe, Box	<i>Amyema miquelii</i>
Orchid, Mayfly	<i>Amianthus caudatus</i>
Pink Bells	<i>Tetradthea ciliata</i>
Rice-flower, Common	<i>Pimelea humilis</i>
Sheoke, Black	<i>Allocasuarina littoralis</i>
Spider-orchid, Greencomb	<i>Caladenia parva</i>
Sundew, Tall	<i>Drosera auriculata</i>
Tea-tree, Heath	<i>Leptospermum myrsinoides</i>
Violet, Native	<i>Viola hederacea</i>
Wattle, Blackwood	<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>
Wattle, Ploughshare	<i>Acacia gunnii</i>
Wattle, Snake	<i>Acacia aculeatissima</i>

Clarksdale vertebrate fauna list for Sunday 10th September.

The list includes some species that the campers saw on Saturday evening. The numbers recorded will be an underestimate for many of the more numerous species.

Birds	No.	Birds	No.
Australasian Grebe	1	Laughing Kookaburra	4
Australasian Swamphen	2	Little Pied Cormorant	1
Australian Magpie	7	Little Raven	2
Australian Shelduck	1	Long-billed Corella	7
Black Swan	2	Australian Wood Duck	2
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike	2	New Holland Honeyeater	4
Brown Thornbill	1	Pied Currawong	2
Brown-headed Honeyeater	14	Red Wattlebird	7
Buff-rumped Thornbill	3	Red-browed firetail	2
Common Bronzewing	2	Scarlet Robin	1
Crimson Rosella	1	Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	1
Dusky Moorhen	1	Spotted Pardalote	3
Dusky Woodswallow	1	Striated Pardalote	1
Eastern Spinebill	3	Striated Thornbill	1
Eastern Yellow Robin	2	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	2
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	1	Superb Fairywren	2
Galah	2	Welcome Swallow	1
Golden Whistler	1	White-browed Scrubwren	1
Gray Currawong	1	White-faced Heron	1
Gray Fantail	3	White-naped Honeyeater	11
Gray Shrikethrush	3	White-throated Treecreeper	1
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	1	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	4
Other fauna	No.		No.
Brown Treefrog	2	European Rabbit	3
Common Brushtail	1	Short-beaked Echidna	1
Common Eastern Froglet	1	Sugar Glider	1

Wednesday Wildflower Wanders

During September, the club arranged late afternoon excursions on Wednesdays to nearby sites to enjoy the wonderful wildflower show in our local Box-Ironbark woodlands.

6th September, Kalimna Park Leaders: Peter & Rosemary Turner

An enthusiastic group enjoyed the first Wednesday Wildflower Wander for 2023 on 6th September. We started on the Tourist Road where the golf course meets the road, followed a track north along the eastern slope below the road, crossed the road and returned along the first section of the Kalimna Circuit Track on the western slope. We then took a track across to the fairway and back to the cars.

As we have seen in previous years, there are differences in the vegetation along the east and west sections. The plant list below includes the species seen on this WWW last year – very few orchids this year. Has the past dry month slowed or stopped their emergence? With thanks to Euan Moore for the copy of his 2022 list.



Fairy Wax-flower, *Philotheca verrucosa*. Photo: Peter Turner

Plants in flower observed in 2023 and 2022. Plants observed in 2022 but not in 2023

Common Name	Scientific Name	Comments on 2023 Observations
Yellow Star	<i>Pauridia vaginata</i> var. <i>vaginata</i>	Seen on 3/9/23
Early Nancy	<i>Wurmbea dioica</i>	
Common Wood-rush	<i>Luzula meridionalis</i>	
Pink Fingers	<i>Caladenia fuscata</i>	A few on western slope
Hooded Caladenia	<i>Caladenia cucullata</i>	
Blue Caladenia	<i>Cyanicula caerulea</i>	
Leopard Orchid	<i>Diuris pardina</i>	A small number on western slope
Wax-lip Orchid	<i>Glossodia major</i>	
Tall Greenhood	<i>Pterostylis melagramma</i>	One plant found
Dwarf Greenhood	<i>Pterostylis nana</i>	Several large patches
Nodding Greenhood	<i>Pterostylis nutans</i>	Several on southern (damp) track
Billy Buttons	<i>Craspedia variabilis</i>	On northern part of eastern track
Many-flowered Matt-rush	<i>Lomandra multiflora</i>	Not observed in 2022

Yam Daisy	<i>Microseris walteri</i>	A few only
Sticky Everlasting	<i>Xerochrysum viscosum</i>	In bud
Creamy Candles	<i>Stackhousia monogyna</i>	In bud along eastern track
Climbing Sundew	<i>Drosera macrantha</i> <i>subsp. planchonii</i>	Seen on 3/9/23
Tall Sundew	<i>Drosera auriculata</i>	Not seen in 2022
Pink Bells	<i>Tetradthea ciliata</i>	
Gold-dust Wattle	<i>Acacia acinacea</i>	
Rough Wattle	<i>Acacia aspera</i>	
Early Black Wattle	<i>Acacia decurrens</i>	Environmental weed
Spreading Wattle	<i>Acacia genistifolia</i>	
Hedge Wattle	<i>Acacia paradoxa</i>	
Golden Wattle	<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	
Narrow-leaf Bitter-pea	<i>Daviesia leptophylla</i>	Just a few plants in flower
Gorse Bitter-pea	<i>Daviesia ulicifolia</i> <i>subsp. ruscifolia</i>	Extensive
Purple Coral-pea	<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	
Rough Mint-bush	<i>Prostanthera denticulata</i>	A few with a few flowers
White Marianth	<i>Rhytidosporum procumbens</i>	
Downy or Mountain Grevillea	<i>Grevillea alpina</i>	Both red and yellow colour morphs. Most on eastern slope
Fairy Wax-flower	<i>Philothea verrucosa</i>	Extensive
Slender Rice-flower	<i>Pimelea linifolia</i>	A few

13th September, Youngman's Track

Leaders: Peter & Rosemary Turner

Youngman's Track is one of our regular WWW areas. Ten members started searching at Stop 1, a parking spot a short way along from Woodbrook Rd. Sadly, along with many wildflowers, some domestic rubbish was spread around. Then on to the junction of Youngman's and Escape Tracks, where Gnat Orchids have been prolific in recent years; fewer in flower but worth the search with Leopard and a few Wax-lip Orchids, and Goldfields Grevilleas. Stop 3 was at the junction with Reilly's Track. The Dusty Miller shrubs on the rocky hillside above were just past peak flowering, but the small group of Blunt Greenhoods seen last year were still in flower. Overall a reasonable list of almost 30 plants in flower on a beautiful sunny afternoon.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Comments
Early Nancy	<i>Wurmbea dioica</i>	
Common Wood-rush	<i>Luzula meridionalis</i>	Stop 1
Pink Fingers	<i>Caladenia carnea</i>	
Leopard Orchid	<i>Diuris pardina</i>	
Wax-lip Orchid	<i>Glossodia major</i>	A few
Blunt Greenhood	<i>Pterostylis curta</i>	Small group at stop 3
Red-tipped Greenhood	<i>P. sp. Afin. parviflora</i>	Seed head

Small Gnat Orchid	<i>Cyrtostylis reniformis</i>	A few flowering – many leaves. Same site at stop 2 as last year
Billy Buttons	<i>Craspedia variabilis</i>	A few
Yam Daisy	<i>Microseris walteri</i>	A few only
Sticky Everlasting	<i>Xerochrysum viscosum</i>	Most in bud, a few flowering
Creamy Candles	<i>Stackhousia monogyna</i>	Many along track esp. at Stop 3
Tall Sundew	<i>Drosera auriculata</i>	Not seen in 2022
Pink Bells	<i>Tetradthea ciliata</i>	All along the track
Gold-dust Wattle	<i>Acacia acinacea</i>	
Rough Wattle	<i>Acacia aspera</i>	
Spreading Wattle	<i>Acacia genistifolia</i>	A few still flowering – most finished
Hedge Wattle	<i>Acacia paradoxa</i>	A few starting to flower
Golden Wattle	<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	A few still flowering – most finished
Narrow-leaf Bitter-pea	<i>Daviesia leptophylla</i>	
Gorse Bitter-pea	<i>Daviesia ulicifolia</i> subsp. <i>ruscifolia</i>	Extensive
Purple Coral-pea	<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	A few
Milkmaids	<i>Burchardia umbellata</i>	A few in bud
White Marianth	<i>Rhytidosporum procumbens</i>	
Goldfields Grevillea	<i>Grevillea dryophylla</i>	Some showing leaf attack
Downy Grevillea	<i>Grevillea alpina</i>	Red colour morphs
Dusty Miller	<i>Spyridium parvifolium</i>	Extensive on rocky hill at stop 3 – just past full flowering
Fairy Wax-flower	<i>Philotheca verrucosa</i>	Extensive
Slender Rice-flower	<i>Pimelea linifolia</i>	A few



Small Gnat Orchid,
Cyrtostylis reniformis



Blunt Greenhood,
Pterostylis curta



Wax-lip, *Glossodia major*
Photos: Peter Turner

20th September, Red White & Blue Track, Muckleford Forest Leader: Peter Turner

The banner photo across the home page of castlemaineflora.org.au is of Sticky Boronia *Cyanothamnus* (formerly *Boronia*) *anemonifolia*, which is known in only two locations in our region – at Irishtown and on a hillside 1.1 km along the Red White and Blue RW&B) Track, south of the mine site. Another spectacular flowering plant uncommon locally is Cypress Daisy-bush *Olearia teretifolia*, also found in the

Muckleford Forest. Both are in flower this month, so on our third WWW we drove to the RW&B mine site and on to find a hillside alight with white Cypress Daisy-flowers, and further along the pink Boronia shrubs.

In 2000, a Greencorps team supported by Newstead Landcare and North Central CMA erected protective fences around three clusters of “Rare Sticky Boronia” – which have spread down the hillside over the past 23 years. There were other pleasing findings on the rather bare ground, including Musky Caladenia, Erect Guinea-flower and several species of pea.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Pink Fingers	<i>Caladenia carnea</i>
Musky Caladenia	<i>Caladenia gracilis</i>
Wax-lip Orchid	<i>Glossodia major</i>
Many-flowered matt-rush	<i>Lomandra multiflora</i>
Yam Daisy	<i>Microseris walteri</i>
Sticky Everlasting	<i>Xerochrysum viscosum</i>
Grey Everlasting	<i>Ozothamnus obcordatus</i>
Pink Bells	<i>Tetratheca ciliata</i>
Gold-dust Wattle	<i>Acacia acinacea</i>
Spreading Wattle	<i>Acacia genistifolia</i>
Daphne Heath	<i>Brachyloma daphnoides</i>
Sticky Boronia	<i>Cyanothamnus anemonifolia</i>
Gorse Bitter-pea	<i>Daviesia ulicifolia</i> subsp. <i>ruscifolia</i>
Showy Parrot-pea	<i>Dillwynia sericea</i>
Small-leaf Parrot-pea	<i>Dillwynia phyllicoides</i>
White Marianth	<i>Rhytidosporum procumbens</i>
Downy Grevillea	<i>Grevillea alpina</i>
Slender Rice-flower	<i>Pimelia linifolia</i>
Cypress Daisy-bush	<i>Olearia teretifolia</i>
Erect Guinea-flower	<i>Hibbertia riparia</i>
Downy or Mountain Grevillea	<i>Grevillea alpina</i>



A hillside of Sticky Boronia, *Cyanothamnus anemonifolia*. Photo: Peter Turner



Cypress Daisy-bush, *Olearia teretifolia*. Photo: Peter Turner

27 September, The Monk - Leader, Noel Young

Despite the dry conditions, we were treated to a long list of plants in flower, perhaps more scattered, but plenty of variety (see below). Some excellent spotting by David Cheal and others revealed some cryptic species, like the Sunray, Bedstraw and Spider Orchid. Conditions were pleasantly warm and windless. The Monk did not disappoint!

David Cheal sent a link to info on the “plant of the day” - [Golden Sunray, *Triptilodiscus pygmaeus*](#).

Common Name	Scientific Name
Grey Everlasting	<i>Ozothamnus obcordatus</i>
Sticky Everlasting	<i>Xerochrysum viscosum</i>
Yam Daisy	<i>Microseris</i> sp.
Billy Button	<i>Craspedia variabilis</i>
Creamy Candles	<i>Stackhousia monogyna</i>
Downy Grevillea	<i>Grevillea alpina</i>
Gorse Bitter-pea	<i>Daviesia ulicifolia</i> subsp. <i>ruscifolia</i>
Narrow leaf Bitter-pea	<i>Daviesia leptophylla</i>
Pink Bells	<i>Tetrateuca ciliata</i>
Twining Fringe-lily	<i>Thysanotus patersonii</i>
Hill Flat-pea	<i>Platylobium montanum</i>
Daphne Heath	<i>Brachyloma daphnoides</i>
Tall Sundew	<i>Drosera peltata</i>
Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus pachycarpus</i>
Early Nancy	<i>Wurmbea dioica</i>
Parrot Pea	<i>Dillwynia</i> sp.
Black anther Flax-lily	<i>Dianella revoluta</i>
Spiny-headed Mat-rush	<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>
Slender Rice-flower	<i>Pimelea linifolia</i>
Bulbine Lily	<i>Bulbine bulbosa</i>
Bluebell	<i>Wahlenbergia</i> sp.
Blacks Goodenia	<i>Goodenia blackiana</i>
Hedge Wattle	<i>Acacia paradoxa</i>
Chocolate Lily	<i>Arthropodium strictum</i>
Common Beard-heath	<i>Leucopogon virgatus</i>
Cotton Fireweed	<i>Senecio quadridentatus</i>
Common Sunray	<i>Triptilodiscus pygmaeus</i>
Bedstraw	<i>Galium</i> sp.
Wax-lip orchid	<i>Glossodia major</i>
Brown-clubbed Spider-orchid	<i>Caladenia parva</i>
Pink Fingers	<i>Caladenia carnea</i>
Leopard Orchid	<i>Diuris pardina</i>



Common Sunray,
Triptilodiscus pygmaeus



Bedstraw, *Galium* sp.
Photos: Noel Young



Brown-clubbed Spider-orchid,
Caladenia parva

Observations

Mez Woodward - An Eastern Brown Snake, about 1.5m long, by a big tree near her front gate, the tree probably being its home as presumably the same one has been seen sunning there a few times. It looked like it had recently eaten, with two visible bulges of prey.



Helen Lawrence – Kookaburra rescue

At our recent monthly meeting, Helen told the story of a poor kookaburra that flew up into the front of a tradie's car and arrived over 30 km later splayed across the grill. After removing it from the grill, it was found to be still alive. Helen took it to the vet who checked the bird out and found no broken bones on X-ray. After an overnight recovery, Helen took it in a cardboard box to close to where the bird had been hit by the car. She showed us a video of the successful release flight!



Euan Moore – Female Pink Robin, Kalimna Park

Tanya Loos – White morph of Grey Goshawk, Hepburn

Great Southern BioBlitz 2023 Castlemaine Region 24 to 27 November, 2023

Block out your diaries and rally your friends, the 2023 Great Southern BioBlitz is fast approaching! Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club is the project host for our local area and Club members and all others are encouraged to participate. This annual event is an intensive four-day effort by citizen scientists across the southern hemisphere to record all living species. Apart from being great fun, every one of us can contribute to the hugely important task of mapping species, their locations and numbers, and assist scientists in their work for biodiversity.

The GSB runs on the online platform iNaturalist, a global online network where citizen scientists, naturalists and biologists upload their photos or audio recordings and help each other identify the species. For those new to iNaturalist, you can find help with getting started and recording observations on the [iNaturalist help site](#).

For more information about the GSB club project, visit [Great Southern Bioblitz 2023: Castlemaine Region](#) on the iNaturalist website and join the project to receive occasional updates. During and after the BioBlitz, this site is where your observations will appear and identification activity will happen.



Yvonne gets up close to photograph a small plant.

Mez Woodward

Vale Philip Ingamells

Many of our long-term members will remember Philip Ingamells who was a member of this club when he lived in Castlemaine some 25 years ago. Phil died suddenly at home at the end of August.

Phil was a giant of the conservation movement. A humble person but with strong, well researched views about the environment and how we should manage it. Phil worked for many years at the Victorian National Parks Association where he was a lead campaigner for the Alpine National Park, for the control of feral animals and on fire management. He also worked hard on the campaign for the Box Ironbark National Parks. You can read more of Phil's tireless work in protecting Victoria's natural places on the [VNPA's website](#), where there is also a recording of Phil's memorial service.

We will all miss Phil's friendship, wisdom and sage advice.

RIP Phil.

1947 - 2023

COMING EVENTS

MONTHLY MEETING: Friday 13th October, 7.30pm

Uniting Church Fellowship Room, Lyttleton St.

“Grampians/Gariwerd Ark – landscape scale predator control”

Speaker: Kailee Savoia (Parks Victoria, Gariwerd),

The Gariwerd National Park is renowned for its significant diversity of fauna species - 50 species are classified as threatened, including the Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby. Introduced predators potentially have an enormous impact on the wildlife of the park. The Gariwerd Ark project aims to deliver predator animal control and reintroductions of native animals such as the Rock Wallaby.

Kailee is the Gariwerd Ark Coordinator. She will give us an overview of the Gariwerd Ark, including the ecology of introduced predators, their impact, and the control efforts that are being implemented.

Observations: Members and visitors are invited to share their interesting observations at the meeting. Please email any photos to illustrate your report as JPEG file(s) to Euan Moore (calamanthus5@bigpond.com) by noon on the day of the meeting.

EXCURSION: Saturday 14th October, 1.30pm

“Pre-1852 Eucalypts around Maldon - their importance and protection”

Leader: Bev Phillips, Maldon Urban Landcare Inc. (MULGA)

Bev will first explain how the MULGA project aims to document and ensure long-term protection of eucalypts that were growing before 1852 (pre-European settlement) in Maldon. These trees are of significant environmental and historical significance.

She will then describe how to identify the four indigenous Box trees in Maldon - Grey, Red, Yellow and Long-leaved, and also Yellow Gum. She will have samples of leaves and nuts, and flowers if available, for people to look at. Bev will then go on to describe how their group has surveyed the trees and calculated their estimated ages (between 170 and 550 years old!). She will then lead a walk around the Maldon township to see some of the surveyed trees.

The terrain will be either flat or very gently undulating, although there is one somewhat steep uphill section.

Meet: 1.30pm at the Octopus (opposite the Castle Motel in Duke St) or **2pm** at the rotunda in the Maldon Shire Gardens in High St (where the Visitor Information Centre and the Maldon Museum are).

Bring: Water, snacks, sturdy shoes and afternoon tea.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the club

Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club PROGRAM

Monthly meetings are held in the Uniting Church Hall, Lyttleton St. at 7.30pm. Members and visitors are invited to share their interesting observations at these meetings. Please email any photos to illustrate your report as JPEG file(s) to Euan Moore (calamanthus5@bigpond.com) by noon on the day of the meeting.

Excursions (Saturday following the monthly meeting) leave from the car park opposite the Castle Motel, Duke Street at 1.30pm unless stated otherwise.

See 'Coming Events' page for more details about October events.

Fri October 13th, Meeting 7.30pm (UCH). Kailee Savoia (Parks Vic) "Grampians/Gariwerd Ark – Landscape scale predator control".

Sat October 14th, Excursion 1.30pm (or 2pm in Maldon). Bev Phillips (Maldon Urban Landcare) "Pre-1852 Eucalypts around Maldon – their importance and protection"

Fri November 10th, Meeting 7.30pm (UCH). Sophie Bickford (Executive Director, Central Victorian Biolinks Alliance) "Landscape conservation".

Sat November 11th, Excursion 1.30pm. Ian Higgins "Remnant vegetation". Visit to a site south of Campbelltown.

Mon November 13th, Roadside Clean-up.

Fri-Mon November 24-27, Great Southern Bioblitz.

Sat/Sun December 2/3, Challenge Bird Count.

Fri December 8th, Meeting 7.30pm (UCH). Members' night. A chance to share your nature highlights from the year.

Tue December 12th. Picnic, Castlemaine Botanical Gardens, 5pm onwards.

Castlemaine Naturalist - email newsletter material to: newsletter.cfnc@gmail.com

* Deadline for the November edition: **27th October**

Club website (Webmaster: Ron Wescott) – www.castlemaineinfieldnaturalists.org.au

Subscriptions (Membership forms on CFNC website)

Ordinary membership: Single \$35, Family \$50

Pensioner or student: Single \$25, Family \$30

Subscription includes the monthly newsletter, Castlemaine Naturalist.

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