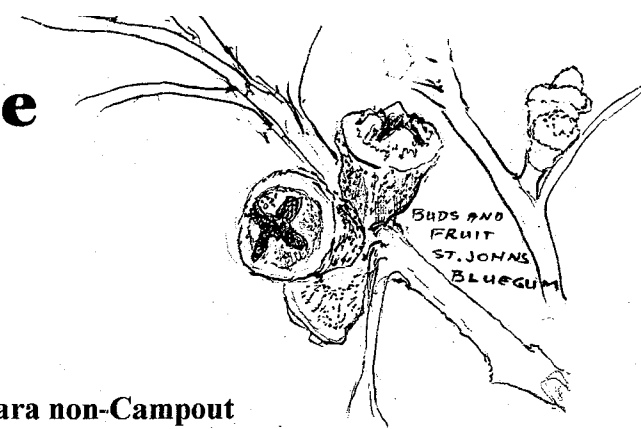


Castlemaine Naturalist

Oct. '99

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Kara Kara non-Campout

It looked like there would be at least eight campers going to Kara Kara, and I for one was really looking forward to camping and being there in the early mornings to hear and see the birds, but, about 7.45am I got a ring from Maureen. I can't say I was really surprised because I had been listening to the regional ABC and had heard that there had been 120 ml of rain at Natte Yallock. What I didn't know was that not only was that road closed, and the one between Maryborough and Avoca *and* between Avoca and St Arnaud, but the road from Stewart Mill to Teddington Res. would also probably be flooded also according to the Police.

That evening I got another call. Hans had rung the Maryborough police again and we were told it was possible to get through. Ken and Maureen decided to camp, so they set off early with the caravan, heading through Avoca. Simon Kennedy had come down from Bendigo to go with me and we headed out at 10 o'clock with nobody else waiting at 27 Doveton St, but when we got to Teddington, after driving through water over the road twice at Natte Yallock, we found that Hans and Ann van Gemert as well as Ken and Maureen there before us. Immediately the three men headed down to the water to see what was to be seen bird-wise and the women headed the other way to see if I could identify some plants they found.

We decided to have an early lunch as it was already 11.45 and then wander around the upper Res. after first heading back toward the hill a bit. We found a pea, which we knew was a *Davisia* but couldn't at first identify, but we finally came to the conclusion, with the help of the *Forgotten Forests* book, that it was *Davisia ulicifolia*, Gorse Bitter Pea, which around Castlemaine has short rather rounded leaves with a sharp point. These were long and narrow. Simon pointed out the St Johns Bluegum to us, which quite surprised me as I tended to take it for granted that Bluegums Belong to Sydney and Tasmania, but these were native to the area, and really quite impressive.

As we wandered on we found quite a number of flowers and plenty of birds, and after finishing walking around the first Res. we started on the second, adding

to our list of birds all the time. By the end of the afternoon I think the list had reached 58, but Ken and Maureen camped overnight and added more to the list, which finished at a count of 67.

The bird list for Kara Kara -

Welcome Swallow	Black-chinned H/e	Crested Shrike-tit
Long-billed Corella	Noisy Miner	Black-fronted Dotterel
Magpie	Striated Pardalote	White-winged Chough
Brown Tree-creeper	Spotted Pardalote	Red-rumped Parrot
Eastern Rosella	Varied Sitella	Grey Fantail
Fuscous Honeyeater	G.Black Cormorant	Weebill
Grey Thrush	Black Duck	Yellow-rumped
Red Wattlebird	Mountain Duck	Thornbill
Musk Lorikeets	Horsfields B-cuckoo	Yellow Thornbill
Little Pied Cormorant	Grey Currawong	Mistletoebird
Little Black Cormorant	Superb Blue Wren	Red-browed Finch
Eurasian Coot	White-bellied (Little)	Speckled Warbler
Musk Duck	Cuckoo-shrike	Red-capped Robin
Kookaburra	Black-faced	White-browed
Grey Teal	Cuckoo-shrike	Babbler
Wood Duck	Dusky	White-throated
Willie Wagtail	Woodswallow	Tree-creeper Square-tailed
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Galah	Kite
Australian Raven	Yellow Robin	Darter
Sulphur -crested	Olive-backed Oriole	New Holland H/e
Cockatoo	Restless Flycatcher	Rufous Whistler
White-plumed H/e	Crimson Rosella	Wedge-tailed Eagle(2)
Yellow-faced H/e	Masked Lapwing	Common
Yellow-tufted H/e	Mudlark	Bronzewing
Brown-headed H/e	Jacky Winter	

The Red-capped Robin was seen at Teddington after everyone else had left, as was the Square-tailed Kite, which was a highlight for Maureen and Ken. Their report reads "One Square-tailed Kite. 5pm, mild, cloudless, light south-easterly. Travelling sailing over canopy along Teddington Res. north edge in a west to east direction. Tail; long, square. Whitish head, down looking. Light underparts. Prominent fingertips."

Maureen and Ken Dredge
Rita Mills

Welcome to new member, Beverly Mary Hill.

From the Victorian Field Naturalists Clubs Association meeting at Mildura

Australian Naturalists Network Meeting and Get-together at Alice Springs will be in July/August 2000. **If interested, please contact Dick Southcombe (Geelong FNC).** Further information will be sent to those expressing an interest. There will be a range of excursions that will be available during the Get-together

Coming VFNCACampouts -

- March 2000 (long weekend). Geelong
- Spring 2000. At Albury/Wodonga. Probably 14/15 October, after the Olympic Games.
- March 2001. Latrobe Valley
- Spring 2001. Ararat, Grampians

VFNCA Newsletter is planned; clubs would be asked to photocopy and include with the club's newsletter.

VFNCA emblem will be Leadbeater's Possum.

VFNCA investment funds. Interest from the fund will be available for conservation projects.

What's a VROT?

It is a Vulnerable, Rare or Threatened Species. Two of the local plants have been added to the VROT list. They are -

Goldfields Grevillea (*Grevillea dryophylla*). It is a holly-leaved grevillea, and is a common species in parts of Wattle Flat Forest.

Flat-leaf Bush-pea (*Pultreanaea platyphylla*). This is the plant members of the Club counted earlier in the year on Nuggetty.

If you know of any populations of either of these plants (except for Wattle Flat and Nuggetty), or the locations of other VROTS, I would be pleased to know.

Thanks to members who have provided information about other VROTS. The program of documenting rare species will be on-going, so further observations would be welcomed.

Ern Perkins.

Mildura Club had a very well planned program, which ran over 5 days, two of which were bus trips to the Salt Interception Scheme, which is all very highly technical, but very interesting. The purpose of the scheme is to prevent the highly saline water which is trapped behind a fault near Mildura getting into the Murray.

We were given notes to help us understand the scheme, and if anyone is interested in borrowing it please ask me.

The other bus trip was to the computerised Water Treatment plant where the waste water us used to grow several species of eucalypt and Belah. On both these days we also had the chance to see something of the country as it was, and as it is now under crop and sheep. There were many interesting birds, particularly in the Belah patches, some fascinating plants, and lots of little lizards.

On the days we went out by car in convoy we visited a Flora Reserve at Redcliffs, the river cliffs from whence the town got its name, another Belah patch, the John Hobbs Eremophila Patch near Dareton, and Kings Billabong.

Some of the special birds seen were Red-capped Robins, Crimson Chats, White-browed Treecreepers, White-winged Trillers, Mallee Ringnecks, Mulga Parrots, Variegated Wrens, Black-winged Stilts, White-fronted Honeyeaters, Black Honeyeaters and Chestnut-rumped Thornbills. There were masses of different daisy flowers, Eremophila oppositifolia, (Twin-leaf Emu-bush) Ruby Saltbush, acres of Desert Senna (a beautifully shaped shrub with golden flowers) and a fascinating orange wattle all of which added to the delights of the outings.

On the second bus trip after we had visited the plantation at the waste Water Plant we drove on to the Millewa, a dryland farming area, calling at the pioneer Tree Gardens and museum after we'd visited another beautiful Belah patch, which also had young Cyprus-pines re-growing. We came back to Mildura via the Sturt Highway, detouring for a look over the flood-plain below Mildura on the way.

Rita Mills

Photopoint.

The photopoint project is proceeding. The aim of the project is to document the district photographically. The photographs, with notes, will be published on a CD ROM. We already have many photographs, but more are needed.

Do you have photographs showing bushland or other parts of the Shire? The photograph might be of landscapes, bushland scenes or other views. If so, would you lend or donate the photographs? Slides, print negatives or prints are all suitable. If possible include the location where the photograph was taken, and the date. Old photographs would be particularly useful.

Close-ups of flowers are not required at this stage, unless it is a particularly rare species, such as Swamp Diurus.

Ern Perkins.

Terrick Terrick Outing 11/9/99

About a dozen of the club members took advantage of delightful weather to travel up to Terrick Terrick on the Saturday morning., and after a quick cup of tea

we set off for the old cemetery, but never got there because we kept finding flowers and birds and bees nests and lizards.....

After lunch we set off for a walk around and over the rock. A blue flower caught our eye and several climbed up to see what it was. It looked lovely from below but close up it was truly beautiful - *Stypandra glauca* Nodding Blue Lily. There was also Pink Purslane, Nodding Vanilla Lilies, Rock Isotome, Grey Mistletoe, Snowy Mint-bush (*Prostanthra nivea*) and Yellow Box in flower. Despite that we only saw one honeyeater species for the day.

Maureen and Ken Dredge's list of birds for the day were -

Brown Falcon	Brown Tree-creeper (b)	Tree Martin
Striated Pardalote	White-winged Choughs	Welcome Swallow
Spotted Pardalote	Black-Faced	Diamond Firetail
Rufous Whistler	Cuckoo-shrike	Common Bronzewing
Gilberts Whistler	Galah	Olive-backed Oriole
(3 + pair)	White-plumed	Southern Whiteface
Pelican (over)	Honeyeater	Superb Blue wren
Restless flycatcher	Grey Shrike-thrush	Kookaburra
Willie Wagtail	Mallee Ringneck	Australian Raven
Fan-tailed Cuckoo	Red-rumped Parrot	Little Raven
Horsfields	Yellow Thornbill	Weebill
Bronze-cuckoo	Brown Goshawk	Magpie
Hooded Robin	Goldfinch	

Spring Walks

1/9/99 The first Spring walk was changed to **Smiths Reef** with a change of leader, George Broadway, and the outing proved to be most enjoyable, with 28 plant species being found in flower.

Three species of *Caledonia* were found, including *carnea* (Pink-fingers) and *cerulea* (Blue Caledonia) with *fuscata* (Dusky Caledonia), once included with *Caledonia carnea* but now considered to be a species in its own right, a query,. Also found were *Diurus pardina* Leopard Orchid, *Hypoxis glabella*, Tiny Star, *Pterostylus longifolia*, Tall Greenhood, *P. nana*, Dwarf Greenhood, and *P. nutans*, Nodding Greenhood, with *P. sp. aff. parvifolia*, Red-tip Greenhood a query. *Wurmbea diocea*, Early Nancys were in flower, as well as several wattles, *Acacia acinacea* Gold-dust Wattle, *A. pycnantha* Golden Wattle, *A. aspera* Rough Wattle, and *A. genistifolia* Hedge Wattle. *Drosera macrantha* Pale Sundew and *D. whittakeri* Scented Sundew, *Hardenbergia violacea*, False Sarsparilla, *Hovea linarius*, Common Hovea, a Buttercup (*Ranunculus*) species, *Tetrateca ciliata* Pink Bells, *Leucopogon virgatus* Common Beard-heath, *Astraloma conostephioides* Flame Heath, *Platylobium obtuseangulum* Common Flat-pea,

Philothea verrucosa Fairy Wax, and *Davisia ulicifolia* Gorse Bitter-pea, completed the list for the afternoon.

8/9/99 Sixteen people accompanied Maureen and Ken Dredge to **Wattle Flat** for the second walk which was along **Youngmans track**. One group walked through the burnt area on one side of the track and the others stayed mainly on the other side of the track. It seemed that a lot more orchids were on the burnt area.

Plants found in flower on the day, listed by Margaret Panter and Penny Garnett, were, - *Wurmbea dioica* Early Nancy, *Caledonia carnea*, Pink Fingers, *Diurus pardina* Leopard Orchid, *Pterostylus nana* Dwarf Greenhood, *Craspedia glauca* Billy Buttons, *Microseris aff. lanceolata* Yam daisy, *Drosera macrantha* Pale Sundew, *Acacia acinacea* Gold-dust Wattle, *A. aspera* Rough Wattle, *Grevillea alpina* Cats Claws, *Tetralthea ciliata* Pink Bells, *Luzula meridianalis* Wood Rush and *Rhytidosporum procumbens* White Marianth.

15/9/99 The third walk of the Spring season was to **the Monk** to see the Crimson Spider Orchids. Stewart Morris was leader this time, and there were again 16 people on the walk. Seventeen plants were recorded in flower - Billy Buttons, *Grevillea alpina* Cats Claws, Twiggy Bush -pea, Golden Wattle, Leopard Orchid *Diurus pardina*, Pink Fingers, Waxlip Orchid, Crimson spider Orchid *Caledonia concolour*, Pink Bells, Tall Sundew (Erinallum), White Marianth, Early Nancy, Showy Bush-pea, Fairy Wax, Yam Daisy and Thick-fruit Buttercup.

22/9/99 Seventeen people, including two children, enjoyed the outing to **McManus Road and Escape Track Wattle Flat** under Rita Mills leadership. Highlights of the afternoon would have to be the numbers of *Glossodia major* (Waxlip Orchids), and Tall Sundews (Erinallum) with the sun behind them. Also seen were Fairy Waxflower, Early Nancys still in flower, Candles *Stackhousea monogyna*, Leopard Orchids, a Buttercup species, Pink Bells *Tetralthea ciliata*, Yellow stars (*Hypoxis sp.*), Gold-dust Wattle, Pink Fingers *Caledonia carnea*, White Marianth, Billy Buttons, Dwarf Greenhood *Pterostylus nana*, Luzula (Wood rush), Cats Claws *Grevillea alpina*, Slender Riceflower, and Long-leaf Bitter-pea *Davisia longifolia*. One lone Gnat Orchid was also found.

“Birding Extravaganza!”

Saturday, November 13

A bus trip to Werribee Treatment Plant under the expert leadership of Fred Smith and Fred Anderson is planned for November.

This is a great chance to see many unusual and hard-to-see birds, including Freckled and Pink-eared Ducks, rails, crakes and waders in one of Australia's top 10 Bird watching areas.

It is a huge - (11,000 hectares) wetland of national importance (declared 1983) and is habitat for over one third of the country's species, with approx. 270 species recorded.

Departure is from the old Tourist Information Centre (opposite the Castle Motel) at **8 am sharp**. Bring morning and afternoon teas, lunch, binocs and 'scope if you have one. There will be a toilet stop on the way, possibly at Anakie, as there are bushes only at Werribee!

Limited seats are available. Cost is \$17 per head payable on booking with Maureen Dredge or Margaret Badminton.

FIRST IN FIRST SERVED!

Observations

- A Fork-tailed Kite has now been as far south as Yapeen.
- Sticky Boronia was seen at Irishtown near Fryerstown on the Walk with the Ballarat FNC.
- A Koala was at John and Nina Coles' in Specimen Gully Road for several days.
- While Ern Perkins was at the Unknown Miners Grave in Kalimna Park he heard the White-winged Choughs making an unusual and noisy alarm call. Soon afterwards a fox, much agitated, appeared, pursued by some very persistent choughs.
- Leslie Perkins saw a Black Honeyeater at Terrick Terrick when she and Ern visited the Park on the Tuesday following the outing, on their way to Mildura Campout.
- On the way back from Mildura Doug and Rita Mills saw a Major Mitchell Cockatoo at Hattah camping ground, and White-winged Wrens, Orange Chats and Little Grass-birds at the southern end of Lake Tyrell, just north of Sea Lake. (Sea Lake would be a good place to stay for a week to explore this area. There is a motel owned by the same people since 1974, and the manager is quite knowledgeable about the places to visit, and there is also a Caravan Park which we didn't check out. Rita M.)
- Brenda Envall reports that Fairy Martens have found the Steiner School of great benefit. They are busily building about 10 bottle nests on the walls of the school. She also told of watching a raptor at Harcourt for a time recently, and the size, pale grey colour and dark wings suggested a Grey Falcon. She could not get a good look at the head. This would be a most unusual sighting if it was a grey Falcon. **Has anyone else seen this bird?**

CFNC PROGRAMME

General Meetings Are held in the Uniting church (UCA) hall, at 8.00pm on the second Friday of each month, except January. Entrances to the car parks are beside the Art Gallery and beside the Church building in Lytleton Street. **Excursions** leave promptly at times stated, usually on the Saturday after the general meeting. There are NO excursions on TOTAL FIRE BAN days.

Business Meetings are held at 38 Campbell Street on the 4th Thursday of each month, except December, at 7.30pm. All members are invited to attend.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME TO CLUB MEETINGS AND EXCURSIONS.

Oct 2 - 17 **Mamunya Festival**. The Club will be leading walks in the Box/Iron bark forests on Oct. 3, Smiths Reef with E Perkins, Oct. 10, Poverty Gully/the Monk with D. Ralph, and Oct. 17, Wattle Flat with R. Mills, leaving the old Tourist Information Centre opposite Castle Motel at 1.30pm. Finish about 4 pm. Bring afternoon tea.

Thurs. Oct. 7 **Annual Broom Pull** Butterfly area of the Botanic Gardens. Details in CN258.

Don't forget the free lunch to follow!

Fri. Oct. 8 **Birds and Words from History and Literature**. Speaker is Peter Allan of Rochester. UCA hall at 8pm.

Fri. Oct. 8. **Stella Bedgood Memorial Lecture**, "Insect Camouflage Mechanisms", speaker is John Landy. Ballarat F.N.C. have invited the C.F.N.C. to join them at 8 o'clock at the Ballarat Horticultural Centre, cr. Gillies and Gregory Sts, Wendouree.

Sat Oct. 9. **Kamarooka Forest** Peter Allan will lead us to a good place for bird nests in the forest. All day outing. We will be combining with Echuca BOC. Leave 27 Doveton St. at 9.30am, meet Echuca BOC at 10.30. Leader P. Allan.

Fri. Nov. 12 **African Parks**. John Turnbull. UCA hall, 8pm

Sat Nov 13. **Werribee**. Birding excursion by bus. Details p5

Fri. Dec. 10 **Members and Visitors night** This is our own "show and tell night", if you have something to share, please bring it along - a few slides, an anecdote, a short talk..... Bring a plate of supper.

Sat. Dec. 11. **Tea at Tullaroop**. Depending on the weather, a BYO picnic tea is planned for our final outing for the year.

Tues. Jan 1, 2000 **BYO Dawn breakfast**. Leader M. Oliver. Details later.

Committee M. Dredge (President) Ph 5470 6474, E. Perkins (V.P. and Grievance Officer), B. Maund (Sec.) ph. 5472 4354, M. Badminton (treas.) R. Mills (N/L Ed. and P.O.), G. Broadway, J. Turnbull, M. Oliver, C. Morris, K. Turner, Z. Thomas.

Subscriptions - Ordinary Membership: Single \$22, Family, \$30

Pensioner or student: Single \$18, Family \$24

Supporting: \$31

The subscription now covers postage of the 'Castlemaine Naturalist'.

Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club Inc.

P.O. Box 324, Castlemaine. 3450.

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