



# CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

JUNE 1989

#146

## ANOTHER GOOD YEAR FOR FUNGI

The CHIRP Walking Group, along with the Cobaw Walking Group from Kyneton had a joint walk in and around the new Koala Park on Wednesday May 24. All became intrigued with the variety of fungi to be found on the walk, including numerous Slender Parasols (*Lepiota ?gracilentia*), plus numerous other varieties - Honey fungus, Birds Nest fungus, Ghost fungus, Rainbow Bracket, Fungus Roses (another of the brackets, I think), red ones that had white gills, purple ones with cream gills, brown ones that looked as if they were made of stiff silk, and on and on. And yes, I did find one for my tea - a nice big Forest mushroom.

Find of the day, though, was made by Chris Craig - a huge brown Polypore with yellow gills and a very thick stem. It must have measured 45 cm across, and was about 10-12 cm through the cap. The stem must have been all of 20 cm through, and not much more than that high. One of the Kyneton walkers took it home for her children to take to school for "show and tell".

Rita Mills.

## FROM DEVENPORT F.N.C. APR. '89

A Brown Falcon with a broken wing was collected at Sheffield but had to be destroyed. It had been banded at Werribee in Victoria by the Department of Biology at R.M.I.T. This is the first known crossing of Bass Strait by this species.

## HEPBURN BIRD LIST

The birds seen on the excursion to Mt Franklin and Hepburn on 13 May, 1989 were

Brown Falcon  
Jacky Winter  
Yellow Robin  
Magpie  
Grey Thrush  
Silver-eye  
Sparrow  
Red-rumped Parrot

Wedge-tailed Eagle  
Scarlet Robin  
White-naped Honeyeater  
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater  
Masked Lapwing  
Striated Thornbill  
Yellow-rumped Thornbill

Welcome Swallow  
Galah  
Willy Wag-tail  
Scissors Grinder  
White's Thrush  
Crimson Rosella  
Red-browed Finch



**MEALY BUNDY**

Mealy Bundy, or *Eucalyptus nortonii*, is perhaps one of the most common eucalypts in the Castlemaine District.

In Castlemaine Naturalist #134 (May, 1988) an article described some of the Eucalypts that could perhaps occur in the Castlemaine District. Mealy Bundy was one of these, with the comment "Its main location is in N.S.W. and east Gippsland, but it also occurs north of Ballarat".

Mealy Bundy is closely related to the Long-leaf Box. It differs in that the buds, and usually fruit, and branches are a silvery. The juvenile and sucker leaves of Mealy Bundy are also grey to glaucous. Long-leaf Box, however, has green buds, fruits and juvenile leaves.

On the Club's May excursion to Hepburn, a very glaucous tree was found, growing on Mr Manning's property, and it was realised that this was not Long-leaf Box, but rather Mealy Bundy. The buds and fruit were also slightly larger, and more angled than those of Long-leaf Box.

Next day, an equally glaucous tree was found growing in Kalimna Point. Since then, Mealy Bundy has been seen in Sandon Forest, at Glenluce, in the Muckleford Forest, at McKenzies Hill, and near Eppalock.

Mealy Bundy (or *Eucalyptus nortonii*) is a rather new species for Victoria. In his "Handbook to Plants in Victoria", Dr Willis notes its presence but suggests that it may be a hybrid, perhaps with White Box. However, it is now accepted as a species, and is included as such in the Flora of Australia. The key to the species is quite specific (on page 51, leaving out distracting species)

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| 1 Buds, and usually fruits, glaucous     | <i>E. nortonii</i>  |
| 1 Fruits not glaucous; buds not glaucous | <i>E. gonicalyx</i> |

In the descriptions of each, the juvenile/sucker leaves of *E. gonicalyx* are described as "light green, slightly discoloured" (i.e. not the same colour back and front), and of *E. nortonii* as "dull grey or glaucous, concolorous" (i.e. the same colour on both sides).

The identity of the Mealy Bundy at Kalimna Point was confirmed by the herbarium, with the comment

"Your area would be particularly important in a study of variation [between Long-leaf Box and Mealy Bundy] because both *E. gonicalyx* and *E. nortonii* grow in the vicinity, and the population of the latter species is quite disjunct."

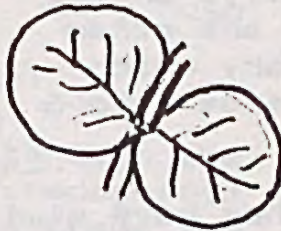
There is a number of questions to be answered.



What is the identity of the local species? What proportion of the trees are Long-leaf Box? Is the distinction clear cut, or do the species merge? Do all Long-leaf Box have green juvenile leaves? And what kind of habitat do each prefer?

All club members can help, by keeping a lookout for each species. If material is collected, buds, fruit, leaves, and juvenile/sucker leaves are needed.

Long-leaf Box and Mealy Bundy are easy to recognise. They have rough box-like bark, and they are the only rough barked eucalypts with round, paired juvenile/sucker leaves. The buds and fruit are stalkless, and often slightly angled.



Juvenile  
leaves



*E. goniocalyx*

*E. nortonii*

Buds & Fruit from chippenale 1968

## A DISTRICT MAMMAL LIST?

The Club keeps a district plant list and a district bird list. As yet it does not have a mammal list. From time to time (such as in the past month, when a management plan for Kalimna is being considered), a list of mammals is required. The Club needs a volunteer to begin such a list. Then all records of mammals etc could be added to the list.

## C.A.E. TOURS

Council of Adult Education tours include

\*Cape York & Thursday Is. 15-29 July, 1989 \$2685

\*Coorong National Park. 13-17 Nov, 1989 \$560

Details from the Secretary.

## FROM VICTORIAN CONSERVATION TRUST ANNUAL REPORT

At Golden Point near Castlemaine, Mr & Mrs Jack Kelly (Elma) have covented 9 ha. of bushland which is surrounded on three sides by forest. The covenant will protect this remenant of bushland in the area. The forest is dominated by Long-leaf Box, Red Box, Red Stringybark and Grey Box.

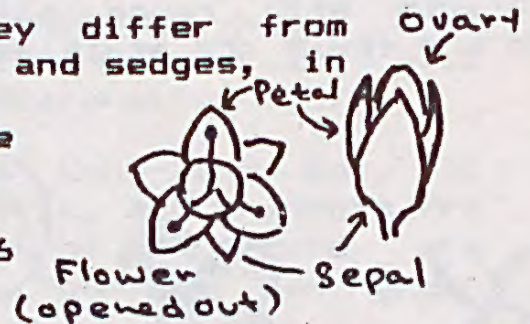


# THE LEAFY RUSHES

Congratulations on having read this far. The Rushes are an interesting group of plants. Unlike birds, they never fly away, and unlike other plants, the flowers usually remain for the whole year.

## WHAT IS A RUSH?

Rushes belong to the *Juncus* genus. They differ from other rushes, such as the Spike-rushes, and sedges, in that the flowers have three sepals and three petals, rather like a lily. Unlike lilies, the petals and sepals are straw coloured. There is also an ovary which contains numerous seeds, and from 3 to 6 anthers.



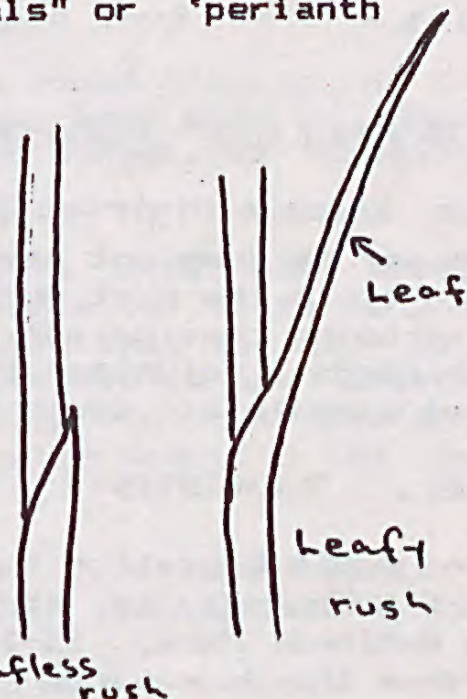
The closely related Field-rushes have similar flowers, but have hairy leaves. If true rushes have leaves, they are always hairless.

Because the sepals and petals are similar in appearance, some books call them 'tepals' or 'perianth segments'.

## LEAFLESS AND LEAFY RUSHES.

Many rushes (the leafless rushes) do not have leaves, or the leaves are straw coloured and found clasping the base of the stalks. The leafy rushes have green leaves that clasp the stem at the base. This article describes the local leafy rushes.

These are a diverse group, and include a number of introduced rushes.



## KEY TO THE LEAFY RUSHES

- 1a Leaves cylindrical, similar to stems, and sharp pointed. Dark green leaves and stems.  
Sharp Rush (\**J. acutus*)
- 1b Leaves cylindrical, and septate-nodulose (with small swellings along the leaves)
  - 2a Flowers 4-10 per cluster, dark coloured. Usually sprawling. Jointed rush (\**J. articularis*)
  - 2b Flowers 10-20 per cluster, pale. Usually an erect plant. Joint-leaf rush (*J. holoschoenus*)



1c Leaves strap-shaped and grass like, 3-8 mm broad.  
Broad-leaf Rush (*J. planifolius*)

1d Leaves solid and flattened.

3a Flower cluster(s) terminal. Tiny plant typically 4 cm high. Capitulate rush (\**J. capitatus*)

3b Numerous flowers, usually single along a number of branches. Toad rush (*J. bufonius*)

3c. Flower cluster apparently at side of the wiry stem. Wiry Rush (*J. homalocaulis*)

#### SHARP RUSH (\**Juncus acutus*)

This rush is very common through the goldfields, and is easily recognised from its dark glossy green stems and leaves, the dark knobby flower clusters, and the very sharp points.

It is salt tolerant and it often indicates saline conditions.

A large patch is growing along the Pyrenees Hwy near the Golf Club dam.

The flower clusters are actually terminal, but the stem-like bract appears to be part of the stem, and so the flower cluster appears to be at the side.

#### JOINTED RUSH (\**J. articularis*)

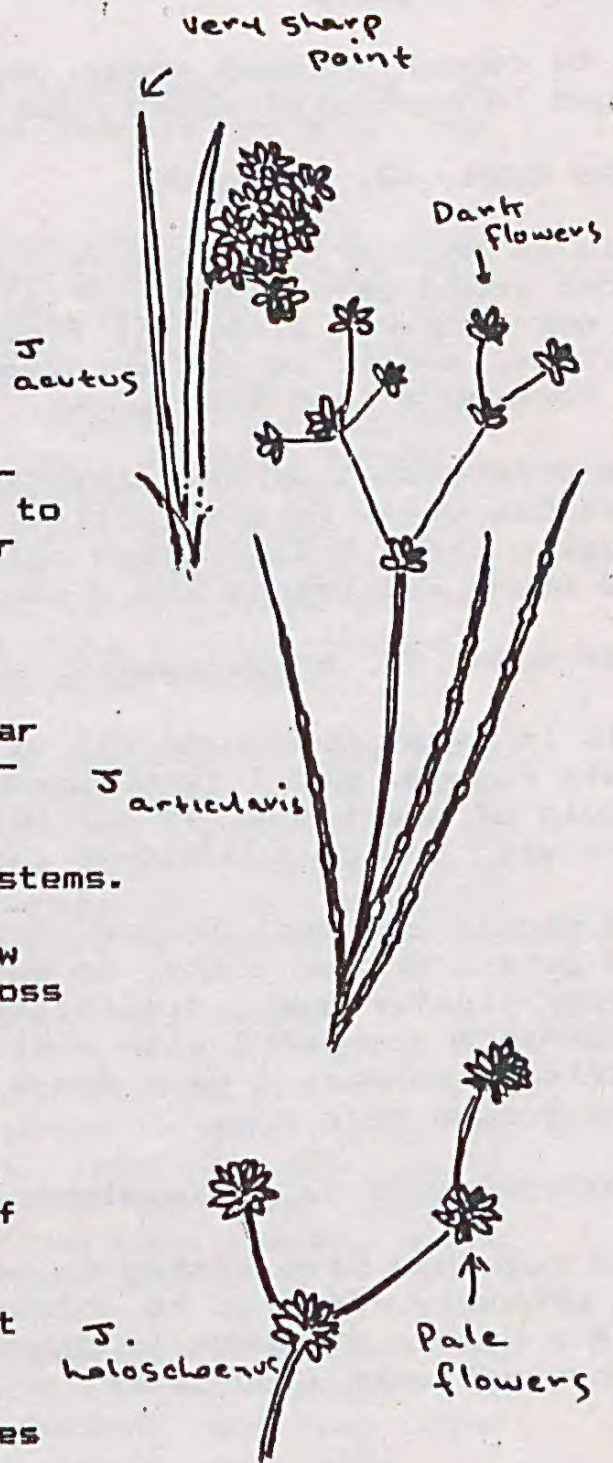
It is often found in drains and similar wet areas. It is similar to the joint-leaf rush, but is usually sprawling. There is a number of dark flower clusters at the ends of the branched stems.

Swellings can be felt along the hollow leaves, and there are partitions across the leaves.

#### JOINT-LEAF RUSH (*J. holoschoenus*)

Joint-leaf Rush is very common at the edge of local dams, and other areas of shallow water, such as shallow mines.

It is similar to the Jointed Rush, but the stems are usually erect. The clusters of flowers on branched stems distinguish it from the leafless rushes that grow in similar locations.





**BROAD-LEAF RUSH (J. planifolius)**

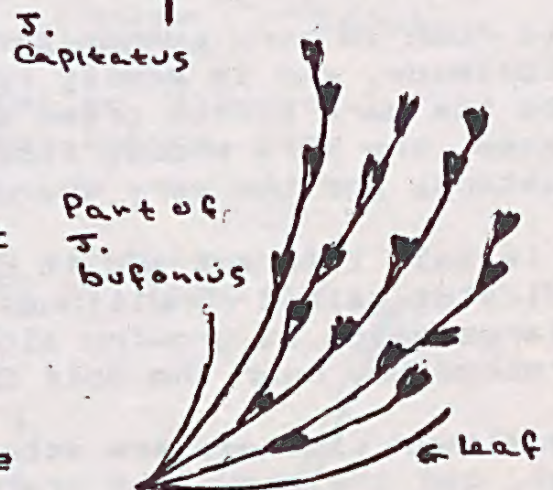
This is less common than many local rushes. Like the Joint-leaf Rush, the flowers are on a branched stem. The flowers are however, smaller, and the flat grass-like leaves are distinctive. It may be found in shallow streams or at the edge of shallow water.



**CAPITATE RUSH (\*J. capitatus)**

This is a tiny plant, and so perhaps not at first recognised as a rush. The flowers are however, typical of a rush, and once seen, is easy to recognise this rush again.

It is common on damp areas, and may be found in profusion along road edges.



**TOAD RUSH (J. bufonius)**

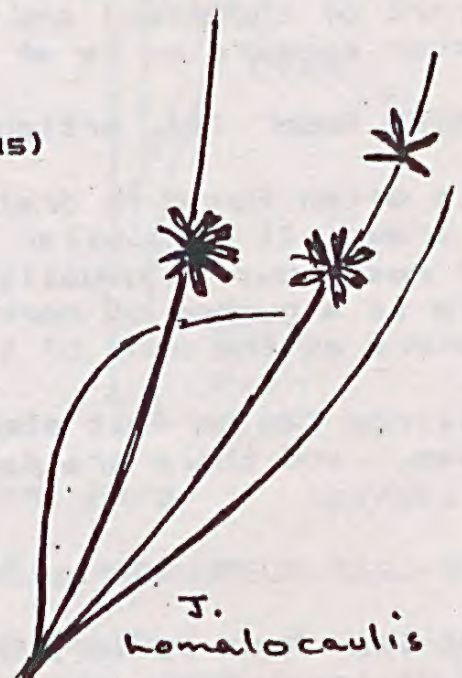
This is another distinctive rush, but at first could be mistaken for a grass. It is quite common along the floor of damp gullies, and it is not uncommon to find it forming a lawn-like cover.

The arrangement of the flowers along the branched stems is distinctive. It usually has a bright green colour, and the stems and leaves are often sprawling.

**WIRY RUSH (J. homalocaulis, syn J. plebeius)**

This is least common of all of the local leafy rushes, and I have found only a couple of specimens. It has wiry stems each with one or two flower clusters.

The sepals are much longer than the petals or the ovary, so that the flower cluster has a distinctive appearance (compared with most of the leafless rushes). I have found it on damp ground near dams.



**BRANCHING RUSH (J. prismatocarpus)**

This rush has been listed in some local plant lists, but probably referred to Joint-leaf rush. The leaves have a number of tubes lengthwise along the leaf. I have not seen a specimen.

E. Perkins.



## NOTES FOR MAY

IN FLOWER IN MID-MAY include Fairy Wax-flower, Sticky Boronia, Wallaby Grass (*D. tenior*), Spreading Wattle, Coffee Bush, Silky Hakea, Grevillea, Red Ironbark and Yellow Gum. An occasional Golden Everlasting and Gold-dust Wattle have also been seen, flowering well out of season. Cedar and Mt Morgan Wattle are also in flower.

TULLAROOP BIRDS. A visit to Tullaroop Reservoir found a single Musk Duck. However, sighting of White-backed Woodswallows made up for the lack of water birds.

WHITE'S THRUSH. A pair were seen, feeding on the ground below pine trees, on the excursion to Mt Franklin. This is a new locality record.

OTHER BIRD SIGHTINGS include 2 spotted Pardalote west of Mt Tarrangower, a flock of Musk Lorikeets feeding on Grey Box flowers in Wattle Flat.

ADDITIONS TO THE PLANT LIST. Some of the additions are from the extreme south of the district - the plant list has now been extended to a little past Glenlyon. Additions include *Gahnia sieberana* (Red-fruit saw-sedge, Wombat Forest), *Cyperus sanguinolentus* (Sedge, Barfold), *Juncus procerus* (Rush, Wombat Forest), *Panicum gilvum* (Panic, from Harcourt North), *Hemarthria uncinata* (Mat Grass, Wombat Forest), *Wahlenbergia ?Litticola* (Bluebell, Castlemaine North), *Daviesia latifolia* (Hop Bitter-pea, Glenlyon), *Pultenaea muelleri* (Mueller's bush-pea, Wombat Forest), *Acacia mucronata* (Narrow-leaf Wattle, Wombat Forest), *A. verticillata* (Prickly Moses, Wombat Forest), *Clematis aristata* (Wombat Forest), *Mimulus moschatus* (Musk Daisy-flower, Wombat Forest).

SNOW GUM AT MT FRANKLIN. Several rather small Snow Gums were seen during the excursion to Mt Franklin. Many trees have been planted on the mountain. However, N. Schoknecht in "Land Inventory of the Loddon River Catchment" states that occasional specimens of *E. pauciflora* occur on the volcanoes to the south, so Snow Gum may be native to Mt Franklin.

## CONFUSION AND YELLOW STARS

There are two common Yellow Stars in the district, the Yellow Star and Tiny Star. They are often found growing in damp spots, such as along gully Flats. They have six small but brightly coloured sepals/petals. As well as usually differing in size, the Tiny Star has two tiny leaves along the flower stalk, and the Yellow Star has only one.

For many years the Yellow Star has been known as *Hypoxis glabella*, and the Tiny Star as *H. pusilla* or *H. hookeri*. In the new Flora of Australia, this has changed, and Tiny Star is now *H. glabella*, and Yellow Star is now *H. vaginata*.



# CASTLEMAINE F.N.C. AGENDA

Fri 9 June. ROADSIDE CONSERVATION. Speaker is Graeme Hill, of Bendigo F.N.C. High School at 8.00 p.m.

Sat 10 June. KOOROOCHANG FALLS. Meet SEC, Mostyn St at 1.30 sharp. Leader is I. Higgins.

Fri 14 July. ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND. Speaker is G. Broadway. High School at 8.00 p.m.

Sat 15 Jul. Birding behind Mt Tarrangower. Leader is M. Oliver. Meet S.E.C., Mostyn St at 1.30 sharp.

Fri 11 Aug. EARLY AUSTRALIAN BOTANISTS by Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. 8.00 pm at High School. Supper.

Sept 8-9 W.V.F.N.C.A. campout at Castlemaine

Fri: Normal meeting night; Castlemaine District. High School at 8.00 p.m. Address by Club members.

Sat: 9.00 excursions. Meet Gardens car Park

Sat: 1.30 excursions. Meet Gardens car park

Sat: 7.00 W.V.F.N.C.A. meeting. Anglican Church hall

Sat: 8.00 Evening program. Beri Perry "Caring for Native Animals"

Sun: 9.00 excursions. Meet Gardens Car Park

12.30 barbecue - Highland Band Hall.

Fri 13 Oct. THE LAST SHANGRI-LA (LADAKH). Speaker is John Zwar. High School at 8.00 p.m.

Sat 14 Oct. SANDON. Joint excursion, led by Ballarat F.N.C. Meet Black Duck hotel at 10.30 a.m. Take lunch. Plants and birds.

Oct 21-23 CRESWICK CAMPOUT. W.V.F.N.C.A. campout at Creswick. Stay at Adekate camp, Dean. Tours of Creswick forest and Mt Beckworth.

Fri 9 Feb. GUNBARREL HWY with Nicolette Hooper

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CASTLEMAINE F.N.C. Inc. P.O. Box 324, Castlemaine 3450.  
Committee: George Broadway (Pres), Barbara Maund (Sec),  
Maggie Oliver (VP), Rita Mills (Newsletter), Kaye Turner  
(Program Sec), Ern Perkins (Treas), Margaret Dunne,  
Elma Kelly, Ian Higgins, Lesley Perkins (Librarian).

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## SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1989

Pensioner/student	\$3	Single	\$5
Family	\$8	Supporting	\$12
Newsletter Posted: Membership subscription plus \$5			

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## SUPPER ROSTER

June 9 E & F Blake      Jul 14 K Turner, L Perkins