

CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

July 1984 92



Land Use Policies

JOURNAL OF THE CASTLEMAINE FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

Founded 1976

President : Mr John Dare
Ochiltree Farm, Clydesdale
Ph. 76 4227

Secretary: Mrs Berry Perry
Pound Lane, Guildford
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General meetings are held monthly at the Castlemaine High School, Lawson Parade, at 8.00 p.m. each second Friday in the month.

Outings are usually held monthly, on the second Saturday of the month unless decided otherwise.

Outings usually depart from outside the S.E.C building in Mostyn Street at 1.30 p.m.

Visitors and people interested in Natural History are cordially invited to attend club functions

It is not necessary to join before attending a club function.

N.B. Committee members please take note that the business meeting will this month be held on Thursday, July 26, at 7.30 p.m. at the home of Kaye Turner, 38 Campbell St.

Other club members are reminded that the business meetings are open to all who wish to attend.

Editorial :

At time of writing rain is actually falling which is very pleasing to see. Let us hope it continues, and keeps away those frosts which are so damaging to the garden. Remember though that a frost may be Nature's way of telling us that we are interfering with the balance of nature. It may also kill lots of bugs if not mice. Speaking of which, I suppose that the owls and kites are not complaining too much.

The main visitors to the garden have been Silvereyes and Spinebills while Yellow-faced Honeyeaters are frequently heard calling, especially first thing in the morning. I have discovered where the Yellow-plumed Honeyeaters are this year; out in the Muckleford Forest. There are many of them in the vicinity of the R.W & B mine.

While I would like to thank Stan for his interesting article, I must confess to feelings of envy as I read it. How nice it would be to forget all the cares and go off with the binocs to visit the feathered friends. Oh well, that is something to look forward to.

LAST MONTH AT CAMPBELLS CREEK (May - June)

by Terry Collins

Little birds flying everywhere in the shrubs, Silver-eyes, Little Thornbills, Wrens, Yellow-faced Honeyeaters, Spinebills and one White faced Honeyeater which arrived June 1st. Many Grey Fantails also come close to the house and seemingly do not worry about humans. One Scarlet Robin continues to sit on a fence down the paddock.

Our Grey Thrush arrived back May 30th with a burst of song which is unequalled; wish there were many more. Surprised to see and hear one Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike flying due South on June 6th.

Plantwise, nothing of note as much more rain is needed in this poor type of country. From a Horsham garden expert on radio stated that the best thing in your garden was Silver-eyes as they cleaned out many insect pests including Scale, but we notice them to be very partial to Cotoneaster berries, competing with the parrots.

(What ! No Wattlebirds ? Ed)

WESTERN VICTORIAN FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUBS ASSOCIATION

MID-MURRAY CAMPOUT AND ANNUAL MEETING BASED ON KULKI KULKI
SCOUT CAMP, WOOD WOOD, 10th, 11th, & 12th AUGUST 1984

Program

Friday 10th August

Casual evening get-together and natural history

Saturday 11th August

- 9.00 Bus leaves for Lake Tyrell, a huge salt lake with high lunettes
- 12.30 BBQ lunch at Eureka Forest (Pine & Belar area)
Latecomers may meet there. (see map)
After lunch, bushwalk at Eureka or other reserves nearby.
- 16.30 Return to Wood Wood (round trip of about 140 km)
- 18.30 General meeting of WVFNCA at Kulki Kulki Hall
- 20.00 Evening program
A speaker from the Ministry of Conservation, Forests & Lands will give an address relating to "Kangaroo Management, Policy and Current Research".
Slides of local Flora and fauna.
Supper

Sunday 12th August

- 9.00 Bus leaves for Mandown State Faunal Reserve. Arrive at 10.30 a.m. Bushwalk, Mallee wildflowers, Mallee Fowl mound, orchids, depending on season.
- 12.30 BBQ lunch
- 15.00 (Approx) wind up and return to WOOD WOOD (round trip of about 120 km.)

Other Information

BBQ lunches on Saturday and Sunday, barbeques, meat, bread, sauce and hot drinks provided at nominal charge (BYO snacks)

Bus rides There will be a charge to cover the costs.
It is important that the bus be used by as many as possible

Important : we are asked to notify the host club as to the

number of members who will be using the bus on the Saturday and Sunday, and the number of people who require BBQ lunches on those days.

WVFNCA SPRING CAMP OUT 12/13/14 OCTOBER 1984
in the

GRAMPIANS NATIONAL PARK

Based at "Aginda" Camp, Dunkeld Road, Halls Gap.

Accommodation at Aginda is fully serviced, with the exception of the bedding.

Cost of Accommodation and meals will be \$27 per person.

Caravan Parks and Motels are available at Halls Gap approx 1 km from Aginda.

The bus trip to the Aboriginal paintings is limited to 20 seats at \$5 each, on a first come, first served basis. Bookings may be made prior to campout.

BIRD WATCHING ON THE BELLARINE

by Stan Bruton

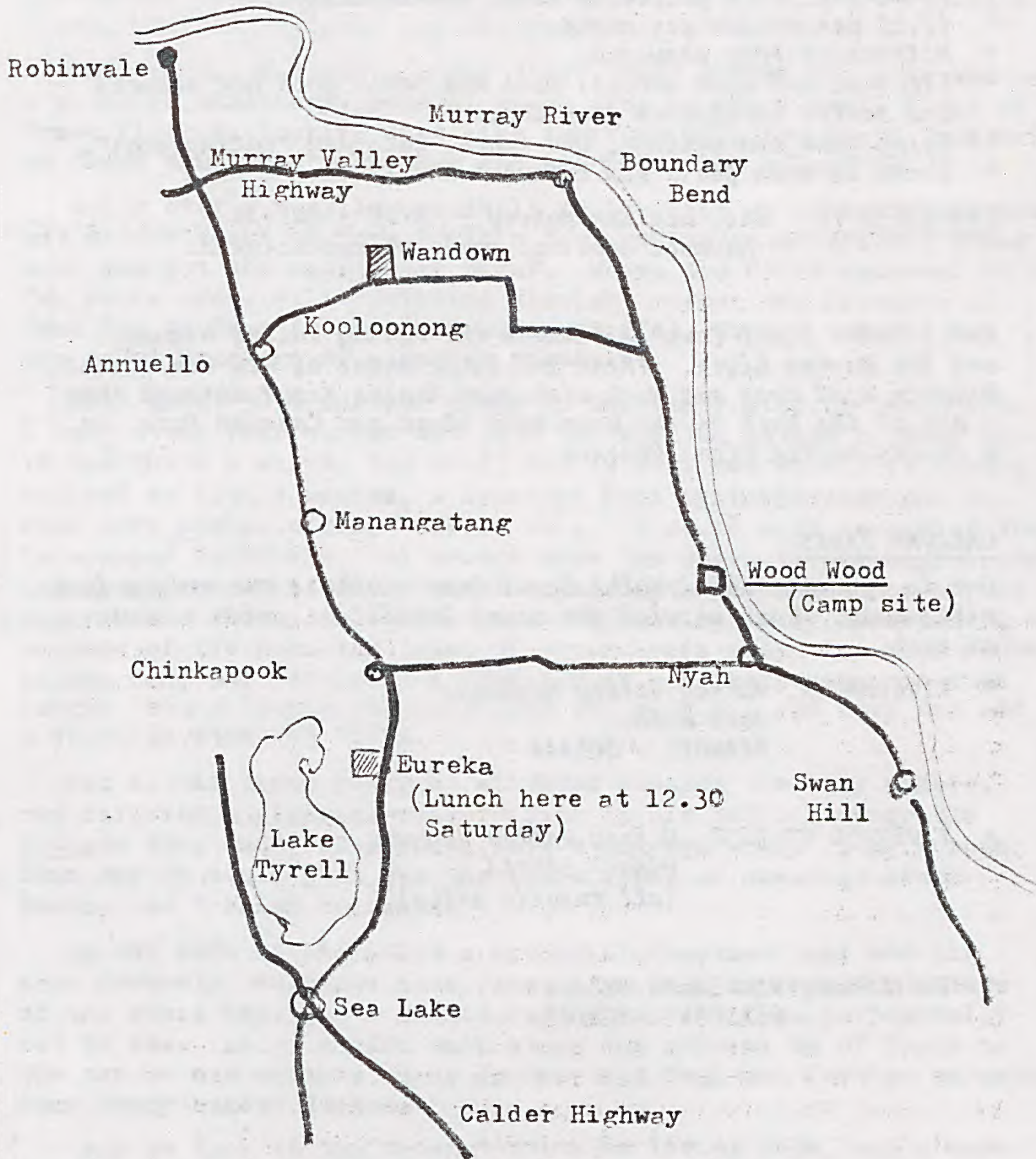
One of the most enjoyable aspects of Field Naturalists' Club activities is meeting such nice friendly people. At the R.A.O.U. Birds of the Wetlands excursion, local Geelong members Alban and Valerie Lloyd-Jones took me about in their car all day. Other members, George and Betty Green offered to take me to their favourite water-watching spot, Edwards Point on the Bellarine Peninsula.

So, next day about mid-morning I arrived at their Portarlington home where we had a cuppa and chatted about her extensive local bird list and their wonderful view over the heathlands, Corio Bay, and the coast with the You-Yangs silhouetted beyond all that.

As he drove me round the coast another 8 or 10 km, George, an active conservationist, told me something of how the fore-shore came to be so well protected from the denuding effects of thousands of cars and campers in the Summer, and how the salt-water lake, now with 40 Mountain Ducks resting away out near the centre, had been saved from reclamation as a rubbish dump. Beyond St Leonards we left the car and walked through a quiet forest of coastal Tea-Tree which reminded me of trudging down to Mentone Beach through just such a lovely scene over 50 years ago.

Continued p.7

Map showing Locations of areas associated with Campout at
 Kulki Kulki Scout Camp, Wood Wood
 August 10,11,12th 1984



ACCOMMODATION:KULKI KULKI SCOUT CAMP

- * Dormitory (6-20 people in each) accommodation.
- * \$2.50 per person per night.
- * Mattresses only provided.
- * Electric and wood stoves, pots and pans, good hot showers and toilet facilities provided.
- * Bring your own pillows, bed linen, eats and "eating-gear".
- * There is room for a few caravans and tents.

ENQUIRIES TO: Mrs. Heather Harvey - NYAH - 302438

- * Advance bookings would be appreciated.

Kulki Kulki Scout Camp is between the Murray Valley Highway and the Murray River. There are large areas of Red-Gum forest between Wood Wood and Nyah with good tracks right through them - and at the back of the Wood Wood Store and Caravan Park, is a lovely Mallee Flora Reserve.

CARAVAN PARKS

One is opposite Kulki Kulki Scout Camp - others are only a few miles away. Each provide the usual facilities, with a store at each.

- * RIVERHAVEN, Murray Valley Highway,
Wood Wood,
PIANGIL - 305444
- * TAVERNER VILLAGE, Murray Valley Highway,
HYAH - 302284
(all ensuite sites).
- * TOOLEYBUC, New South Wales,
PIANGIL - 305293.

The Blue Wrens and Thornbills were singing, but mostly hidden from sight. As we came out of the bush a flock of 20 or more Little Wattlebirds flew by. In a shallow tidal inlet from Swan Bay on our right, were three White-faced Herons and two Mountain Ducks, while a Skylark was singing, away up out of sight.

Following a fisherman's car track, made before the area was made a wildlife sanctuary, several years ago, we saw a small flock of Green Finches, looking just like sparrows till you heard them trill or focus the binoc's on them and saw their rich colouring.

Going over a very low sandhill to the left we walked along the wet narrow beach of Port Phillip Bay, seeing an occasional Field Wren amongst the waist high scrub. Where the Point narrowed to a few yards wide, still pointing straight across the entrance of Swan Bay to Swan Island (off Queenscliffe), George pointed out the gaunt wreckage of a sunken submarine.

Only about 50 m further along on the other side of the point, a wide stony reef curved out into the shallow waters of Swan Bay. It was quite a short, low reef, but in shallows around it were a hundred or little waders, a handsome Pied Oystercatcher and an even more noble-looking Pacific Gull. I could only recognize the Red-capped Dotterels, but George knew the Sharp-tailed Sandpipers and those smart little Dotterel types, with black patches across their white chests he (quite correctly) to be Ruddy Turnstones, because of the peculiar twist of their heads each time they pecked in the sand and pebbles. A Grey Plover was there too; not much larger than a blackbird, soft grey and with a large dark eye and a shortish straight bill.

Two Little Terns (very !) alighted amongst the busy waders, one carrying a gleaming silvery fish in his bill. A memorable picture they made, so slender, alive and graceful. Away across Swan Bay we could just see the black forms of numerous Black Swans, and 8 White Pelicans.

On our side of the point a colourful Chestnut Teal and his more demurely coloured mate floated quietly in the calm waters of the great bay, and a Little Pied Cormorant flew purposefully out to sea. As we strode back along the several Km of beach to the car we saw another 25 or so Chestnut Teal and further on were four Hoary-headed Grebes.

And so back to the Greens' upstairs living room, and a very belated lunch, and more "bird talk".

Meeting: July 13.

Speaker, Professor emeritus J.S. Turner.

Those who were fortunate enough to attend the first part of the Prof's talk will need no urging to turn up again for a continuation. Those who did not manage to make it for the first session will realize what they have missed, namely a fascinating illustrated discourse on a life spent in the field of Natural History with involvement in planning organisations.

Outing: July 14.

To the Muckleford Forest, including the Red, White & Blue Mine. The season has not been very favourable to the growth of plants so far, but in the forest the Ironbarks are flowering and the Honeyeaters are busy. The forest looks very attractive at present despite the lack of flowers so pack your binoculars, stout shoes, afternoon tea and meet at the SEC building at 1.30 for a pleasant afternoon.

Outing: August 11

Vaughan Springs and Glenluce.

Meeting: August 10.

This time we hope to have Dr & Mrs Champion who were unfortunately unable to make it last time.

WVFNCA CAMPOUTS

August 10,11,12, Mid-Murray Campout at Wood Wood.

October 12,13,14. Grampians Campout at Halls Gap.

See inside pages for further details.

POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION IN PARADE ?

The Castlemaine 150th Anniversary Committee is planning a Grand Parade on Saturday November 17, 1984.

We have been invited to participate

Any ideas ?

Any volunteers ?