

The

# North-Eastern Naturalist

Issue 164 : OCTOBER 2004

**Patrons:** Mr. L.H. Cairns, O.B.E. and Mr. B. A. Farquhar O.A.M.

**President:** President: Ross Coad, P.O. Box 275, Scottsdale 7260. phone: 63 523269  
mob. 0417 190046

**Vice President:** Graham Cashion, Cox's Lane, Branxholm.

**Secretary / Treasurer:** Jill van den Bosch, 311 East Minstone Road, Scottsdale.  
Ph 63 523004. e.mail :jillv@jvdbosch.com

**Editor:** Louise Brooker, 482 East Minstone Road, Scottsdale. Ph. 63 522122  
[home]  
mob. 0427 522123 e.mail: brooker@vision.net.au

**Committee:** Denny Walter, Revel Munro, Mike Douglas

**IT IS THE MISSION OF THIS CLUB to encourage the study, appreciation and preservation of our natural and cultural environment, the animals, plants, geology and landforms, including those of the coastal and marine areas in the North East region of Tasmania.**

**OCTOBER 9th**

**HARRIDGE FALLS - FROME RESERVE** - Leader Lou Brooker  
A little known waterfall in the Frome Reserve not far from Weldborough. Approximately 3km on marked track. Meet 10am Weldborough.

**NOVEMBER 13th**

**BOOBYALLA RIVER** - Leader Mike Douglas 63 561243.  
A walk of 7.5 km. Through riparian swamp gum forest, wildflower heaths, paperbark wetlands and buttongrass moorland. Mostly flat terrain. A little scrub bashing. Gaiters recommended - snake country! Meet 10a.m. on the Banca Road, 7 kms from the Waterhouse Road junction and 12.3 km from Winnaleah [Grid ref. 677614]

**NOVEMBER 19TH - 21ST**

**FEDERATION WEEKEND - WEEGENA HALL** - Look inside for more information.

**DECEMBER 11th**

**BLUE LAKE CIRCUMNAVIGATION - SOUTH MOUNT CAMERON.** Leader Revel Munro. A 5 or 6 km walk mostly on tracks looking at wetlands, badlands, and the occasional piece of mining heritage. Meet at Little Blue Lake car park 10 a.m.

**FEBRUARY 5th**  
[one week earlier than usual because of tides]

**BUSH TUCKER - LITTLE MUSSELROE BAY** -Leader Dee Mills. 6344 1732. Learn about the plants of the coastal and estuarine environment. Gather and cook tucker. Camp the night or stay at Lanoma Point if wet, or just come for the day. Meet 10 a.m. Little Musselroe Campsite. Take Cape Portland road out of Gladstone. This book would be a useful reference. 'Coastal Plants of Tasmania' a \$7 plant identikit by the Australian Plant Society [Birchalls]

# news / views

## New Life Members.

club.

Denny was Club President from 1997 - 2001. In this role, he was the leader of many outings, but will be especially remembered for his camps to Maria Island, the north-west coast, and the south east coast.

In 2003 the Municipality of Break O'Day announced Denny to be Citizen of the Year.

He and Joy have set a wonderful example to other club members by being involved as volunteers on many conservation projects around Tasmania. They have certainly enriched the life of our club.

At the AGM in June, we celebrated the contributions made by two of our very special and long serving members, Joy Rayner and Denny Walter, by making them Life Members.

Joy, a member since 1983, was a committee member for many years and until quite recently, held the position of Public Officer which was especially important during the period when the club was becoming incorporated. One of Joy's long-term projects was striving to have the status of the Bridport Wildflower Reserve upgraded - this was achieved in 2002.

She has led many outings and has hosted the club for and been guest speaker at several AGM meetings. With this award we acknowledge her commitment to the

## Welcome to New Members:

It's a good sign, in my opinion, to have new members fronting up for the first time at an A.G.M. . We welcome Patti and Jeff O'Donnell from St. Mary's to our ranks.

We had met Karl and Robina Balzer, also from St. Mary's at the fungi foray in May, but will take this opportunity to welcome them too.

## Annual General Meeting Report.

At an especially well attended Annual General Meeting, we read in his report of Revel Munro's decline to renominate as president of the Club. During his three years at the helm, Revel instigated an e.calendar, where the forthcoming activities of the club were posted to about seventy recipients, many of them contacted in the course of his work as Ringarooma Catchment Co-ordinator. This was a great way of publicising outings and ultimately led to new members joining the club.

Another of Revel's 'special touches' was his use of the visual format for the Annual General Report, an innovation brought about because of his reluctance to put pen to paper. I'm sure he put just as much thought and probably more time into the preparation of these picture shows; they were certainly a most enjoyable feature of our A.G.M.'s.

Although Revel and Helen are certainly not withdrawing from Field Nat. activities, this is certainly an appropriate time to thank them for their contribution to the leadership of the club and for the many times they've hosted activities in their home.

## Les Rubenach

Sadly, I report the news of Les Rubenach's passing.

Les worked in the coal mines in Fingal but then spent many years as Post Master there, before moving to Hobart about five years ago.

His special interest was in orchids and his special talent was to photograph them. He was acknowledged in the introduction to "The Orchids of Tasmania" for his lengthy field trips made especially to photograph new species for the book. Indeed, I believe about 70% of the photos in the book can be attributed to him.

Les was a gentle man. He occasionally kept us company on outings, but not nearly often enough.

## Congratulations Jeff

Hearty congratulations to Jeff Jennings for winning the prestigious new Break O'Day Photographic Award. Jeff's prize includes a 3 year contract with the Wilderness Gallery at Cradle Mountain, where some of his photos are already on display. The winning photograph was captured at Tomahawk on one of those extremely frosty mornings when even things at the seaside became frozen. Frost on sand dunes !!

## "SPINELESS WONDERS" - Field Nats. Federation Weekend - 19th - 21st November - Weegeena Hall

The November Federation meeting, hosted by the Central North Field Naturalist Club will include activities and talks focussing on some of Tasmania's unique invertebrates. A delicious meal of Indian / Fijian curries will be prepared by cook extraordinaire Mariamma Hunter, ably assisted by husband Jim. For those wishing to stay on either or both Friday and Saturday nights, accommodation is available nearby free of charge.

The activities planned so far include:

Sat. morning: search for snails and multipedes with Kevin Bonham and Bob Mesibov.

Sat. afternoon: Kevin and Bob guide us through the process of identification.

Sat evening: Jim Nelson talks about Tasmania's crayfish fauna.

Sunday: Federation meeting for delegates ...walks for others.

Please notify Sarah Lloyd by phone on 03 6396 1380

Or by e.mail sarahlloyd@iprimus.com.au

Or I could undertake to forward numbers to Sarah. [L.B.]

It should be a great weekend....lets make up a party !!

## Blue Tier News

Arrestees attended court in St. Helens on June 7th 2004 . The lawyer representing the group, Mr. John Avery entered not guilty pleas on behalf of the arrestees.

# more news / views

According to my information, they were later found guilty in court on September the 16th, but no charges were handed down.

The group has the full support of the community and the Break O'Day Council. Check out the Friends of Blue Tier website: [www.bluetier.org](http://www.bluetier.org)

## The March of Spanish Heath by Mike Douglas.

The Spanish Heath, *Erica lusitanica*, continues its advance across the landscape. This garden escapee gone mad is choking out the native common heath along our road verges and is invading scrub and woodland.

There is now an almost continuous swathe along the road from Bridport to Bell Bay. It is spreading through bush around the Scottsdale tip and recently I found a specimen in the Bridport Wildflower Reserve. There are outbreaks along the Waterhouse Road and I fear that these will spread into the Cameron Regional Reserve and the Waterhouse Protected Area. On our recent trip to Heritage Falls it was seen advancing up the E Road towards the Douglas Apsley National Park.

The problem is exacerbated by roadside slashing which enhances seed dispersal. The roots then sucker after slashing.

A single plant can produce 250 million seeds during its lifetime of 30 years. Seeds remain viable for 4 years.

So what is being done about this scourge ? To my knowledge - nothing !

## From the Frogseekers Newsletter

The WWF FROGS ! IN TASMANIA program running for the past four years and sponsored by Rio Tinto and Comalco has drawn to a close.

Last summer and autumn, over 150 people participated in workshops similar to the one we organised. Data gathered has significantly increased the knowledge especially about two target species: *Litoria raniformis*, the green and golden frog and *Limnodynastes peronii*, the striped marsh frog.

The key achievements of the WWF Frogs! Program included:

- Conservation action planning
- Greater understanding of distribution and threats
- Creation of education tools, a website, frog publications, field guides, fact sheets, CD Roms.
- Formation of a Scientific Advisory Panel and an Educational Working group.

The Frogs Australia Network will continue to build on the social capital in the frog science community in Australia.

Its website will be launched late in 2004.

Details of this new F.A.N. will be posted on the WWF Australia Frogs! Website.

To find out more go to: [www.frogs.wwf.org.au](http://www.frogs.wwf.org.au)

## 'Frogs in an Effluent Society'

This new booklet has just been launched in time for National Threatened Species Day. Produced by Dr. Sarah Broomhall, the book examines the effects of environmental contaminants on frogs. It is available as a downloadable PDF on the WWF website..... [www.wwf.org.au](http://www.wwf.org.au)

## Other new publications :

- **'Frogs of Tasmania'** by Murray Littlejohn.

This book is a comprehensive guide to the eleven species of amphibians that occur in Tasmania. It is an extensive revision and expansion of the first edition of the book and is a valuable aid to amateur and professional herpetologists.

To purchase a copy contact: [Sherrin.Bowden@utas.edu.au](mailto:Sherrin.Bowden@utas.edu.au) or tel . 036226 2610

- **'Tasmania's Natural Flora'**

This book has been compiled by a group of members of the North-west branch of the Australian Plants Society Tasmania Inc. It covers 700 species of flowering plants, including the conifers, lily and iris families, with minimal use of botanic terms. Most of the descriptions are complemented by colour photographs to make it easier for you to identify your favourite plants.

For further information contact:

'The Editorial Committee', PO Box 3035, Ulverstone MDC. 7315,

phone: 036425 9229 or

Email [yahgunyah@southcom.com.au](mailto:yahgunyah@southcom.com.au).

Publication in late September. Pre-publication orders will be taken now.

- **'A Century Afield'**, the history of the Tasmanian Field Naturalist Club, by Janet Fenton.

Thylacines and monsters, pantomimes, a magic lantern—even perhaps a spy—are all part of the history of the Tasmanian Field Naturalist Club [the Hobart club]. This story chronicles one hundred years of fun, friendships, field trips and scientific discovery. If you wish to buy, send \$35 + \$6 postage and handling to this address.

Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club, GPO Box 68, Hobart, Tas. 7001.

## From the Tasmanian Land Conservancy Newsletter

This organisation raises funds to acquire areas of critical Tasmanian habitat and manages them forever. It also buys properties with conservation values, protects the values using a covenant and then resells the land to be cared for by new owners.

In 2002, our club made a contribution towards the purchase of 1000 acres at Long Point on the East Coast. At present the TLC is waiting to hear the outcome of a hearing [12th July] challenging the subdivision application. It is confident that the outcome will be positive.

The 19 hectare Dorothy Reeves Reserve at Port Sorell, a property purchased by the TLC with their revolving fund, is now protected under covenant and is ready for re-sale. This property has Black Gum woodland, sphagnum bog, 33 species of orchid including one critically endangered and one which until recently was unknown. The TLC is asking for offers of over \$145,000.

Bordering the Martha Lavinia Nature Reserve on King Island, Is a densely vegetated 200 hectare block with large stands of King Island Blue Gum, Brookers gum, White gum and mela-leuca forest. It also has a house and dam which overlooks the coast. It is protected by covenant and is now for sale for \$85,000 + .

# millipedes, maps and mysteries.

This is the title Bob Mesibov gave to his fascinating lecture on the occasion of our A.G.M. in June. It could be the title of a who dunnit, but in a way it encapsulates Bob's years of research into millipedes in Tasmania.

The following information is available on a website which he began constructing late in 2002 and finished a year later. The address is <http://www.qvmag.tas.gov.au/zoology/multipedes/mulintro.html>. The site will help in the identification of Tasmanian 'multipedes' (native and introduced) and will direct you to relevant books, reports and papers. With his permission, I'm using parts of it for this report.

## About the word 'multipede'

He didn't make it up! The term 'Multipede' goes back at least 260 years. This wave-like peculiarity of motion [in millipedes] is described in a curious old book, *An Essay towards a Natural History of Serpents*. Charles Owen, D.D. London, 1742: "The Ambua, so the natives of Brazil call the Millepedes and the Centipedes, are serpents. Those reptiles of thousand legs bend as they crawl along, and are reckoned very poisonous. In these multipedes the mechanism of the body is very curious: in their going it is observable that on each side of their bodies every leg has its motion, so that their legs, being numerous, form a kind of undulation, and thereby communicate to the body a swifter progression than one could imagine where so many short feet are to take so many short steps, that follow one another rolling on like the waves of the sea." (pp. 40-41)

'Myriapods' means the same thing as 'multipedes', namely 'creatures with many feet'. Many zoologists prefer 'myriapods' to 'multipedes' because 'Myriapoda' has long been a grouping in animal classification, like 'Insecta'. However, 'Myriapoda' is no longer widely trusted as a *natural* grouping. While centipedes, millipedes, Pauropoda and Symphyla are each undoubtedly a twig on the tree of life, they may not all be on the same branch. 'Myriapoda', furthermore, doesn't include Onychophora, the velvet worms. For these reasons Bob prefers to lump the five many-footed groups on this website as 'multipedes'. The word has no standing in animal classification but it is descriptive, and it plainly points to the two most familiar myriapod groups, centipedes and millipedes.

## Which multipede is which?

**Millipedes** have 2 pairs of legs on most body segments. **Centipedes**, **Pauropoda** and **Symphyla** never have more than 1 pair of legs on a body segment. **Velvet worms** do not have obvious body segments, and their legs (unlike those of the other multipedes) are not divided into joints.

## Millipedes.

Most multipedes are millipedes. Tasmania has at least nine introduced millipede species and at least 160 natives. The introduced species are abundant on farms and in gardens, and are familiar to every householder. Few people, however, are aware of the remarkable diversity of our native millipedes, which are found in all terrestrial habitats from sedgeland to rainforest and from coastal dunes to rocky alpine areas. There are also cave-adapted millipedes in Tasmania and at least one semi-aquatic diving millipede. The great majority of Tasmania's native multipedes are endemic to Tasmania. This means that even if you find a multipede somewhere else in the world which looks almost exactly like one of the Tasmanians on the website, it is *highly unlikely* that they are the same animal.

You do not need to know a great deal about millipede anatomy for identification purposes. Be prepared, however, to count carefully the number of leg-bearing body segments on your specimen before going to the identification page. You will find that it is relatively easy to identify a Tasmanian millipede to order,

## Millipedes, maps and mysteries ... continued

but often very difficult to identify to species. The main reason is that most millipede species, taxonomi-

cally speaking, are defined by the structure of the male *gonopods*, which are modified legs used to transfer sperm during mating. In some millipede groups, adult males of different species are virtually identical in overall appearance, but have strikingly different gonopods. Unfortunately, there is currently no way to positively identify to species the females and juveniles of most millipedes.

For an excellent general summary of millipede biology see Hopkin & Read (1992), and for an overview of the Tasmanian millipedes see Mesibov (2000). In brief, millipedes feed mainly on decaying plants and fungi. They all have two pairs of legs on most posterior body segments, but there is a big range of body sizes and shapes in the group. Many species are night-wandering. In tropical areas and in most parts of the Northern Hemisphere, millipedes are highly seasonal and are hard to find during dry or cold periods. In contrast, most Tasmanian millipedes are active all year, although they may shelter deep in the soil during particularly dry summers.

A remarkable feature of the Tasmanian millipede fauna is that most species have small geographical ranges with very sharp boundaries (for example, see the map of *Gasterogramma* species). Where two species ranges meet along a common boundary, the transition zone where the two species mix may be less than 100 m wide. For more on these "buglines", see the Winter 2004 issue of *Forty South* magazine.

Bob talked about 'faunal breaks' - places in the landscape where there are sudden dramatic changes in species lists. These breaks are places where some creatures' ranges suddenly stop. One break Bob has investigated is at Weaver's Creek, a tributary of the North Esk River, south of Nunamara. On a ridge in this vicinity six millipede and two centipede species have their boundaries. An even bigger break involving more species runs up the Mersey River SE from Devonport.

So far, there have been 15 faunal breaks identified across Tasmania. Bob has ruled out rock types, forest types, climate and elevation as influencing factors for the location of some of the breaks. It's easy to understand why, when collecting millipedes, it's very important to know where you are. Specimen labels should give the collecting locality as a 100 m grid square, or as latitude/longitude **to the nearest second**. Bob is happy to be contacted for more information and help in identifying Tasmanian specimens .  
[mesibov@southcom.com.au](mailto:mesibov@southcom.com.au).

Meanwhile, his research goes on as he tries to figure out exactly what is going on, why the "buglines" are where they are, and how they stay so well defined. Good luck to you Bob, and thank you for a most interesting and inspiring talk.

Map: faunal breaks in Tasmania.

## *Away with the Birds.....*

I'm not sure whether to say thank you to the people who indicated they would come but then didn't or to commiserate with you for having missed a special treat.

You see, because space is at a premium in the basement of the Queen Victoria Museum and every spare centimeter is taken up storing specimens, we were going to have to go through in two groups. So the group of eleven was lucky enough to be able to stay two hours. Our hosts were Peter Duckworth, a volunteer at the museum who is working on organizing the bird collection, and Craig Reid who is a research officer with the museum. Both men went out of their way to give us an interesting look behind the scenes.

The collections include stuffed bodies of birds, many of which are used for displays, a large collection of eggs, and wet specimens which are kept in the spirit store in bottles. There are skeletons of birds and there is a nest collection. But by far the most extensive collection is what are called the "skins". These look like "birds on a stick". They are prepared by being slit down the belly, turned inside out, cleaned of everything but the skull, then stuffed with cotton wool or dacron and sewn up again.

In the past - pre 1940 - arsenic was used to clean the skins, so those who handle them now still have to pay attention to cleanliness. Borax is used to degrease. The whole process is finished off with the specimen being placed in the drying cupboard for a couple of weeks. Of course labelling is very important and it was here that we saw some familiar names. Each bird was labelled with its name, where and when it was found and the name of its finder. Ken and Betty Tucker had brought with them a frozen bird which they had found in March this year and which Peter identified as a spotted quail thrush. I assume this is what will happen to this fairly rare specimen.

Starting with the Black currawong, Peter showed us the endemics. Scientists seem to enjoy abbreviations and on this occasion we saw trays and trays of l.b.b.'s ...these were the silvereyes. We were able to compare the three pardalotes, and the orange bellied and the blue winged parrot. Of the honey eaters some were more, some less familiar. We saw the yellow throated, the strong billed, the black headed and the tawny crowned. Of particular interest was an albino starling and a female robin with pale red bands across her chest—unusual.

Peter paid tribute to Joy Rayner for providing him with one of his precious references— "Birds of Tasmania" by Littler, to Bob Montgomery for the huge body of research into Tasmanian birds, and to Trevor Singline of St. Helens for providing the museum with a collection of eggs. Although modesty prevented him from mentioning it, I'm sure Peter is high up there on the list of people who have made a valuable contribution to the knowledge of Tasmanian birds. We felt very privileged to share some of it that day.

### **Some interesting facts about Wedge-tailed Eagles.**

Diet of wedge-tails in rural areas is **45%** rabbits, hares and cats. **30%** wallabies, possums, wombats and echidna. **7.5%** sheep, goats. **10%** birds. **5%** reptiles **2.5%** other.

Although in 1970 the CSIRO published an analysis of the cause of death of 12 000 lambs in several states. Although up to 34% of dead lambs had been at least partly eaten, only **2%** of lambs born had been actually killed by predators such as eagles. More importantly, only **2.7%** of dead lambs would have survived if a predator had not attacked.

My source says there were only 75 breeding pairs in Tasmania...that was a fact sheet prepared in 1993 by Parks and Wildlife. But I believe the number is more but still less than 200 breeding pairs. About 40% of nests are built on private land, 40% in state forest and only about 2% on crown land.

Our wedge tailed eagles have been isolated for 10 000 years from their mainland counterparts and have become separate subspecies which means they have little genetic insurance.

# A Day at the Races

“Its amazing what trouble people went to to get a bit of water to wash a bit of tin” - this insightful comment was heard as a chirpy group of field nats. gathered in the bush just outside Gladstone ready to head off on a walk along one of the many water races in the area. The circular 4.5 km walk traversed old races in the vicinity of Dryden and Galloway Creeks, beneath the northern slopes of the Mt. Cameron Range.

Those who love a double entendre had a ball that day. For here we were gathered at an old gravel strip-ping site, about three hundred metres from the main highway, listening to Mike Douglas tell us all about the “most important **race** in the north east”. It took us a few minutes to realize he wasn’t talking about the Ledgerwood Picnic Races.

Because the Gladstone area was virtually an alluvial tin field, a supply of water was essential for sluicing and in 1881 an extensive network of water races and dams was begun with its intake at the Great Musselroe River. **This** was the “most important race in the N.E.”... the Mount Cameron Water Race, and it was to reach almost 100 kilometres in length by the time it was finished.

Today we would walk on part of the Western Deviation begun in 1922 when water was brought across the Ringarooma River to Gladstone. Our track would follow the Western Deviation for two kilometers until it crossed Galloway Creek at Deep Creek Falls. We would also follow Ogilvie’s Race and Lee Ah Hong’s Race. A glance at the map Mike had drawn showed a virtual maze of races criss-crossing the land all with equally interesting names.....there was the Wedgetail Peak Race, Galloway’s Race, Lee Ah Toy’s and the Three Legged Race.

It was obvious we would have to get accustomed to a whole new idiom ... there were races, deviations, flumes, leads and siphons. So with all that sorted, we were away. But of course, it wasn’t long before some of us had taken a deviation of our own. And it wasn’t because the track was poorly marked, [although it was a bit ‘heavy’] it was because we were just so deep in conversation that we lost consciousness of everything else. And the rest of the pack did have the ‘bit’ between their teeth. So to speak.

We walked through a number of different vegetation types. There was stringy bark, black peppermint and bullock forest and woodland with an open heathy/ sedgey understorey. Lots of grass trees. Sporadic occurrences of the rough tree fern could be seen, below the Western Deviation along the bed of Cyathea Creek.

Of special interest were two fine specimens of *Spyridium parvifolia* var. *molle* in flower. Named *Spyridium* from the Greek for ‘little basket’ because of the shape of the calyx with the leafy bracts surrounding the usually **insignificant** flower-heads. This unusual plant has little white flowerheads surrounded by greyish green bracts with brighter green leaves of the same shape further down the stem. Quite unusual !

A little further along we came across a lichen field, a carpet consisting of two species of lichen, one bright green the other a milky pale green. We were all fascinated and wished we knew more about these. Mike thought *Cladia agregarda*.

He didn’t make a big deal about it, but we knew Mike had spent a lot of time throughout the summer and autumn clearing and marking this track and just as much time researching and writing his paper. I know I’ve made light of the day here, and it would be fair to say that we all had a really great day, but we also gained an appreciation for those early surveyors who with their hand-held inclinometers were able to achieve such gentle slopes as 1/2000. And for the bushmen and miners who would have dug the races by hand.

The only thing we didn’t get was a photo finish !!

# even more news / views

Contact & information: ph. 6225 1399. Email: info@tasland.org.au and on the web: www.tasland.org.au

## Gallery Opened.

The T.L.C. has just opened a new office and gallery for nature photography. Its at 827 Sandy Bay Road, Taroona.

The Taslands Gallery is dedicated to the use of photography as a tool for conservation and had as its first exhibition, the beautiful macroscopic images of orchids of Allegra Biggs-Dale from Bruny Island .

Currently, it is showing Tasmanian and Macquarie Island Images by Alistair Dermer.

## Beach blob mystery solved at last

Marine biologists have definitively shown that the "Chilean Blob" and other similar finds is whale tissue. Local marine biologists could find no bones in it, prompting speculation that it might be the body of a new species of giant octopus. Even the discovery of the unique dermal glands of the sperm whale in the blob could not dampen this popular hope.

But Sidney Pierce of the University of Southern Florida in Tampa and his colleagues have put the blob through further tests. As they now report in *The Biological Bulletin* (vol 206, p 125), electron microscopy has revealed a network of tough collagen fibres that are consistent with whale tissue. Also, although no cells remain in the blob, fragments of its DNA match that of a sperm whale.

By putting preserved samples through similar tests, the researchers have confirmed that the "giant octopus of St Augustine" from 1896, **the 1960 Tasmanian west coast monster**,# two Bermuda blobs from the 1990s and the 1996 Nantucket blob are also just the washed-up remains of whales.

# remember Peter Rubenach's fantastic photos ?

Source: 23 June '04 New Scientist Print Edition. Article by Jon Copley.

## From the N.E. Bioregional Network Newsletter.

Some of the hotspots mentioned in the 2nd n/letter of this group.

- Illegal clearing of *Eucalyptus ovata* near Goshen.
- Approval given for clearing of 193 ha of native vegetation at Enstone Park.
- Break O'Day Council acts on illegal land clearing at St. Marys, St. Helens and Seymour.
- Three coupes being logged near Mt. Pearson containing important ironbark [*Eucalyptus sieberi*] forest.
- Proposed Scamander "Sanctuary" with a 101 lot subdivision immediately north of the Winifred Curtis Reserve is another example of the B.O'D.Council ignoring the advice of its planner.
- Logging on the Mt. Nicholas Range degrading blind velvet worm habitat.

Good luck to the members of the Network who were to meet with Forestry to propose protection for forest in the Range.

## Queen Victoria Museum Newsletter

A rare jewel beetle *Castiarina insculpta* has been found at Miena, on the southern shore of the Great Lake. It is one of only three specimens to have ever been identified. On the Threatened Species register, the beetle is listed as 'endangered possibly extinct'.

This latest find was discovered in February almost by accident in the back of a ute. It is thought that this beetle is out "flying" in late summer, but its not certain which plants it's associated with.

It is hoped that this find will help stimulate further work on our threatened invertebrate species.

## Want to know more about Gambusia ?

I've written about Gambusia before. This aggressive pest fish commonly known as the mosquito fish is impacting seriously on our freshwater environment. In other places in the world, the fish has caused a decline in freshwater biodiversity and the extinction of some species. In Tasmania, there's the possibility of impact on the Green and Gold Frog.

*Gambusia holbrooki* is an introduced North American fish which ranges in size from 3.5 to 6 cms. It thrives in shallow, warm, slow moving to still water, but it can also survive down to almost freezing and can tolerate a wide range of salinity levels. People were most likely responsible for the introduction and dispersal of this fish - its commonly kept in aquariums.

A couple of weeks ago at the Tamar Island Wetlands Interpretation Centre, I met Rodney Milner a newly appointed Project Officer whose job it is to raise community awareness and to investigate management options for Gambusia in the northern region. He is making himself available to talk to school groups and is stationed at the interpretation centre at the Tamar Island Wetland Centre. If you haven't done so yet, a visit to the Centre is really interesting and worthwhile.

More information: [www.parks.tas.gov.au/reserves/tamar](http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/reserves/tamar)  
If you want to check when Rodney is there, phone 6327 3964, or e.mail him at: [gambusia@wildcaretas.org.au](mailto:gambusia@wildcaretas.org.au)

## From the Threatened Species Network Newsletter

#Changes to Threatened Species Schedules.

In June, 24 changes were made to the schedules of the Tasmanian Threatened Species Protection Act 1995. This includes 14 new listings, 9 de-listings and 2 changes of status. Unfortunately one of the new listings is the white bellied sea eagle.

#Wingaroo Crown Land Protected.

Judy Jackson has announced the intention to reserve 2,377 ha of Crown Land overturning a commitment by David Llewellyn to sell it to a nearby landowner. This is a major victory for the conservation of threatened species as the blocks include seven different vegetation communities, and 25 state listed threatened plants.

## From the Wilderness Society.

# "The current annual logging rate of the magnificent Styx giants alone produces greenhouse pollution equal to the total

# still more news / views

emitted by all cars in Tasmania in six months.”

# “Carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere are at a higher level than for 400, 000 years.”

# “The Greenland ice sheet is dropping in height by 10 metres a year”.

# “Scientists worldwide predict global temperatures are set to rise between one and six degrees in the next 100 years”.

# “According to the French Government 11,435 people died in France due to the heat wave of 2003. It is estimated that within 20 years, at least 2,300 Australians over 65 years old will die heat related deaths”.

# “Eucalypt forest [plantation] grows fast when young drinking the water that would otherwise flow into rivers and dams. It will take about 150 years for a replanted area to release as much water as old growth”.

## **Request for Information: Observations of bumblebees in native vegetation.** from Dr. Andrew Hingston.

A feral population of the Eurasian bumblebee *Bombus terrestris* was discovered in Hobart in 1992. The effectiveness of this bee as a pollinator of greenhouse tomatoes has prompted repeated calls for its importation to the Australian mainland, where it does not yet occur.

The most important factor influencing the severity of an imported pollinator’s ecological impact is its capacity to become established beyond the agricultural areas where the target crop is grown.

A survey of the distribution of bumblebees in Tasmania up to autumn 2001 found evidence of them breeding in all of Tasmania’s major types of native vegetation, including within six national parks and the most remote parts of the World Heritage Area.

Because of the ongoing debate over the capacity for bumblebees to invade native vegetation, and the time that has passed since their distribution was last surveyed, I would like to survey the distribution of bumblebees in Tasmania during the coming spring, summer and autumn. I would appreciate it greatly if people could let me know of any places where they see more than 10 bumblebees in one day in native vegetation between spring 2004 and autumn 2005.

Dr. Andrew Hingston, Geographical and Environmental studies, University of Tasmania, Private Bag 78, Hobart 7001.

Email: [hingston@utas.edu.au](mailto:hingston@utas.edu.au)

Phone: 6223 1223 [h]

Submissions are welcome / invited from interested individuals and organisations, on any matter considered relevant.

A discussion paper has been developed to aid the preparation of submissions and this can be obtained by contacting Ian Sansom on [03] 6233 2447 or email [scp.review@dpiwe.tas.gov.au](mailto:scp.review@dpiwe.tas.gov.au)

Submissions can be emailed to the above address or faxed to [03]6236 9744 or mailed to:

Review of State Coastal Policy 1996,  
Strategic Policy and Planning Division,  
Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment,  
G.P.O. Box 44,  
Hobart. 7001

In The Examiner [September 25], Mrs. Jackson said “Our state policy has worked to date, this process of review is a statutory requirement.....”

I challenge all who love our unique, natural, and beautiful N.E. coastline to consider putting pen to paper. We have no excuse if projects like Ralph’s Bay, or Scamander ‘Sanctuary’ get up and going and we haven’t spoken up when we had the chance.

## **Review of State Coastal Policy**

The government is reviewing the State Coastal Policy 1996 to determine how it can be improved to ensure that planning and management reflects contemporary sustainable development practices.

Old newsletter items September 1983 Volume vs velocity [quote]  
Frome Kayak Club Nr. 83  
Exploring Uppper Scamander Number 87  
Velvet worm nr. 90 & 107  
Lower Marsh Creek report .... Michael Garret Number 118 & 119  
Velvet worm report Bob Mesibov number 102

### Next newsletter

New members Ann Rayner, Jeff and Patti O.Donnell [edits the bioregional network newsletter.

News from other clubs ?

Frank Strie burrowing crayfish

Blue Tier news Water hotting up as the issue of the future closely related to forestry....permission to quote findlayson ?

[Write report about a.g.m revels report....bob mesibov & millipedes 9web article0](#)

[Herbicide and insecticide spraying](#)