

The North-Eastern Naturalist

Issue 183 FEBRUARY 2012

President: President: Jill van den Bosch, 6 Arthur Street, Bridport. ph 63560 483 and 0429 644 329

Vice President: Lesley Nicklason, ph 0400557418

Secretary / Editor : Louise Brooker, 20 Edward Street, Bridport. ph : 6356 0381 and 0417 149 244 e.mail: brooker@vision.net.au

Treasurer: Revel Munro, 'Kanara Neika', Telita. Ph. 6354 2254

Committee: Jenny Bicanic, Pam Bretz, Mike Douglas.

Web address: <http://www.netasfieldnats.org.au>

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.

The Club conducts outings on the second Saturday of the month.

FEBRUARY 11.

MT. HORROR WITH SEAN BLAKE.

Meet at corner of Warrentina & Forester Roads at 10am - turn right in Branxholm opposite the supermarket and drive until we see Sean. The outing will include a car shuffle and a downhill walk with some uneven ground. Medium grade. Into the mist forest first, then through various forest communities until we reach the bottom where Sean will talk about past forest harvesting by IXL Saw Milling from 1928 - 1945. Contact person: Jill van den Bosch 63560483 and 0429 644 329

MARCH 10.

VISIT BLACK SUGARLOAF—BIRRALEE .

Choice of day excursion or stop over. The walk will consist of a slow, easy, uphill 2kms through various vegetation types (dry forest, dogwood forest, melaleuca swamp forest etc.) looking at birds, fungi, slime moulds etc. We'll be guided by Ron and Sarah who know their bushland like the palms of their hands. More info. on next page. Suggest people organise car pools to share petrol costs. Queries about staying over? Ring Lou Brooker 63560 381.

APRIL 14.

MT STRONACH.

A number of people have mentioned not having done this walk even though its so accessible. Of course, it is uphill to the top, a distance of no more than 2 kms., but the track is graded gently and only requires moderate fitness. Stunning views once there. Meet at signed turnoff about 2kms east of Scottsdale 10am. Contact person: Lou Brooker 63560381.

MAY 12.

FURTHER EXPLORATIONS AT WATERHOUSE.

Mike will lead this easy 5km. beach walk covering botany, birdwatching and geomorphology from Herbie's Landing to Waterhouse Point and return. Meet at 10am at the junction of Waterhouse and Homestead Roads [signposted] approx. 27kms east of Bridport. Contact person: Mike Douglas 6356 1243.

APRIL / MAY

FUNGI FESTIVAL - SOUTH + NORTH WEST

See next page for more information.

Fungi Festival 2012

Fungimap and NRM South are organising a Fungi Festival to be held in Hobart from Thursday April 26th to Monday April 30th, 2012. The proposed program is a Symposium on Conservation and Management of Fungi (Thursday and Friday) and then on Saturday and Sunday there will be workshops and forays about fungi, similar to past Fungimap conferences. The Monday session is tentatively set aside for training in the use of the Atlas of Living Australia for fungi records data. The following weekend (5th-6th May), Fungimap, in conjunction with Cradle Coast NRM, will be running some more forays and workshops in the Tarkine. The following website: <http://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/fungimap/home> will be giving updated information about this event in the New Year.

How to get to Black Sugarloaf for March Outing

Email from Sarah.

Head west to Westbury via the new Bass Highway and take (B72) towards the Frankford Highway.

After about 15 km turn left into Priestley's Road (there's a sign to Brushy Lagoon). Drive 1km and turn right into Denmans Rd (opposite white picket fence with one or two vans usually outside.)

(If you're coming from Scottsdale you may prefer to go via Georgetown, Exeter, Frankford Highway and take the turn to Westbury.)

Denmans becomes very rough after about 1 km. Park at the flat area opposite the letterboxes. We will meet you there at 10.00. We will then have a 2km walk to our house through various vegetation types (dry forest, dogwood forest melaleuca swamp forest etc.) looking at birds, fungi, slime moulds etc. We're usually at the house by lunch time. Bring own lunch.

Afternoon - bags the best beds and sit and/or wander around until evening. We have a gas BBQ so I suggest people bring something to cook. We'll probably have plenty of salad from the garden but check closer to the time.

I just did a mattress count: 2 singles in the tee-pee; 2 singles and one double elsewhere (in different rooms). Also some thin foam which would suffice for a hardy person. We have 6 sleeping bags/doonas and blankets.

There's plenty of floor space for more beds but people will have to bring their own mattresses.

From the Ocean Planet Newsletter

Walking into a supermarket or fish and chip shop the last thing you would expect to see is an endangered species for sale. There would be outrage if tiger, whale or panda were being sold. But you will find globally endangered hammerheads available, right here in Australia.

As silently as sharks slip on to the menu, their numbers slip towards extinction. Every year a staggering 100 million sharks are caught and killed across the globe. Huge consumer demand for shark fins and other shark products has made sharks among the most valuable fish in the sea. It's no wonder that sharks are predicted to be the next global wave of extinctions in our oceans.

But this isn't a distant problem in a distant ocean. Australian fisheries catch hundreds of thousands of sharks each year, sending shark meat to our supermarkets and fish shops and contributing hundreds of tonnes of fins to the shameful international trade in shark fin. Inconceivably this includes tens of thousands of sharks caught from within the World Heritage listed Great Barrier Reef including endangered species like

the scalloped hammerhead.

It beggars belief that at a time when shark populations are collapsing around the globe, our own governments allow our sharks to be killed in a World Heritage area. While more and more nations are giving their sharks sanctuary, here in Australia we're finning, filleting and battering them into oblivion.

From Australian Marine conservation Society Press release.
www.marineconservation.org.au

Coast Care week.

During Coast Care week at the University of Tasmania at a forum titled "Healthy Coasts and Communities", six graduates from 2011 presented summaries of their work and findings.

Dr Matt Sheehan had just finished a Doctorate on "changes caused by rice grass to intertidal sedimentation of the Tamar Estuary." Since its introduction into the Tamar in 1971 the area covered by rice grass has grown to somewhere between 370 and 450 ha. It traps about a million cubic metres of sediment. The policy now is to try to contain the area affected.

Whilst studying the "Holocene Coastal Evolution of Tasmania", Brigid Morrison found that as a result of Aeolian processes [movement of sand] freshwater peats as old as 40,000 years are being uncovered.

Kim Beasy talked about the limiting factors on saltmarsh ecosystem distributions with particular reference to a study conducted at Boullanger Bay near Robins Island on the North West Coast.

Jen Inglis's study was site specific. She illustrated with many maps and graphs, the changes that have occurred in the coastline at Kelso Beach and how they are being managed.

In another such study, Margaret White looked at the estuary of the Detention River and the coastline at Hellyer where erosion has caused considerable concern for a number of houses. Her conclusion was that this erosion was not caused by rising sea levels and could be managed by dredging the channel of the river in an attempt to return it to its original course.

Claire Johnson's study was about conflicting values relating to water quality and ecological health at Grants Lagoon, Binalong Bay. This study was in response to a measured water quality value of 80% for the lagoon where e.coli levels have been of recent concern.

It was a great chance to hear first hand of their work and to have the chance to question and converse with students researching such a wide range of coastal issues.

TAS Shorebird Data Can Inform Your Project

Since 2000 Birds Tasmania has been collecting data on shorebirds along many sandy beaches around the state with an emphasis on beaches where resident shorebirds and small terns breed. The data can be used to support project planning for coastal on-ground works such as weeding and marine debris removal. If you or your group are interested in beach nesting birds in your area and how this information can help to inform your coastal activities now or in the future, contact Eric Woehler at Birds Tasmania on email: eric.woehler@gmail.com or 0438 204 565.

Tasmanian Coastal Works Manual

This manual highlights the latest practices in sustainable management for Tasmania's coastline and is a comprehensive tool. The manual covers the broad spectrum of coastal land management activities including heritage, vegetation and wildlife management, climate change and sea level rise adaptation and

response.

The Manual can be downloaded free as separate PDF files from <http://www.environment.tas.gov.au/index.aspx?base=9877>

Conservation Volunteer Australia

CVA has great projects every day of the week where you will find international Volunteers joining forces with locals achieving some great environmental outcomes. CVA welcomes everyone who wants to join in the fun and mix it with positive and friendly people.

There are a number of opportunities for those who join:

- Volunteer for a single day or more if you choose!
- Enjoy a unique week-long volunteer holiday and visit fantastic locations around Tasmania
- Get involved with your colleagues on our employee volunteering program

Call them on (03) 6334-9985 or email: launces-ton@conservationvolunteers.com.au

Website: www.conservationvolunteers.com.au

Cats Euthanased.

Tamar NRM recently launched the findings of its project 'Feral Cat Management in the Weymouth and Bellingham Areas' - outcomes were 58 feral cats were euthanized. If these feral cats had remained in these areas, they would have decimated local wildlife by eating six tonnes of food a year, and spread diseases like Toxoplasmosis. On behalf of the community they have written to Minister Wightman asking for the following recommendations:

1. The introduction of a State-wide education campaign on responsible cat ownership,
2. Compulsory micro-chipping and sterilisation of all domestic cats,
3. Research the effects of Toxoplasmosis on native wildlife and
4. Funding for community based feral cat management programs.

Devil Roadkill.

A project which harnesses the passion of the Tasmanian community for its iconic Tasmanian Devil, has so far been most successful. In the first year of the Roadkill Project, 400 reports from across the state were received via reply paid forms, the tassiedevil.com.au website and telephone and sms messages.

The two messages of the Project are : slow down on the roads between dusk and dawn and report any devil roadkill you see. Forms for reporting roadkilled devils can be sourced from any Service Tasmania or visitor information centre. A list of outlets is on the www.tassiedevil.com.au website.

Get some forms and keep them in the car.

Threatened Plants Discovered at Bridport.

A survey by Threatened Plants Tasmania was recently conducted to search for threatened plant species within the Granite Point Conservation Area near Bridport.

Target species included the endangered orchids *Thelymitra antennifer*, rabbit ears and *Prasophyllum apoxychilum*, tapered leek orchid as well as the vulnerable *Pultanaea sericea*, the chaffy bush pea. The signature threatened species of the Wildflower Reserve *Acacia ulicifolia*, the juniper wattle, was not a priority for this survey due to its relative abundance. Threatened species Tasmania representatives were assisted by the Dorset NRM Facilitator, Jay Wilson and by Bridport CoastCare volunteer, John Davey. Numerous threatened plant species were identified with the *Pultanaea sericea* species being found to be relatively common locally. The discovery of the elusive tapered leek orchid by volunteer John Davey was particularly rewarding

All identified threatened species were specially recorded and will be entered in the National Values Atlas. A comprehensive report was produced that included management recommendations to protect identified threatened species. [Source: press release by Jay Wilson.]

The aim of the survey was to update records of threatened species especially in the areas that had been part of the planned burns in recent years.

It might be useful to mention for members' information, some of the other threatened species that had previously been recorded but were not mentioned above. Two of the lesser known trigger plants : *Stylidium perpusillum* is the tiny trigger plant and *Stylidium beagleholei* is the fan trigger plant, both rare. Also two onion orchids: *Hydrorchis orbicularis* which is the swamp onion orchid and *Microtidium atratum* which is the yellow onion orchid, both rare. Very difficult to tell apart are the two lesser known grasstrees, *Xanthorrhoea arenaria* and *X. Bracteata*, the sand and the shiny grasstree, both vulnerable.

In his report about the groups' findings, Phil Collier expressed concern about the lack of sightings of the two high-priority orchid species. Timing may have been a factor, space to grow another, also sensitivity to fire.

He suggested that local groups [such as ours] could play a significant role in surveying for the *Thelymitra* and the *Prasophyllum*. This surveying could commence in late September 2012, although it may not reveal itself again until 2013 following the recent burn.

Since the *Prasophyllum* may respond to burning to promote flowering, it might be worthwhile checking out the recent burn in about mid-October 2012. It was also suggested that in the future, a series of ecological burns in known or likely habitats might be beneficial.

The locations of any observations should be recorded using a GPS unit with datum set to GDA, then submitted to the Natural Values Atlas, where information on **how** to submit is also available. www.naturalvaluesatlas.tas.gov.au

I wonder if any members would like to be interested in the survey mentioned above.

Source: from Report by Phil Collier

Some bits from Yellow Throat

Address for environment Tasmania www.et.org.au

Summarise whats in the newsletter and give address.

Address for ocean planet newsletter www.oceanplanet.org.au

Ditto.... summarize

NCCARF info.