

# The Clematis

Winter 2010  
Issue No 84



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Quarterly Newsletter of the Bairnsdale & District  
Field Naturalists Club Inc A0006074C

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*The Newsletter of The Bairnsdale & District  
Field Naturalists' Club Inc.*

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## **BAIRNSDALE & DIST FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB INC.**

A0006074C

### **List of Office Bearers for 2010**

President: Pat McPherson ph. (03) 5152 2614 pmcphers@datafast.net.au  
Vice President: James Turner ph. (03) 5155 1258 jameslynn@tvsched.com  
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### **Correspondence to:**

The Secretary,  
P.O. Box 563,  
BAIRNSDALE 3875

**Web Site: [www.eastgippsland.com/bdfnc](http://www.eastgippsland.com/bdfnc)**

### **General meetings take place at:**

Noweyung Centre, 84 Goold Street Bairnsdale

**General meetings take place:** as per program at 7.30pm *sharp*

**Committee meetings take place:** at members homes, at 4.00pm

(see program)

### **Group Co-ordinators:**

**Botanic Group:** James Turner Ph. (03) 5155 1258  
**Fauna Survey Group:** Jenny Edwards Ph. (03) 5157 5556  
**Bushwalking Group:** Noel Williamson Ph. (03) 5152 1737  
**Newsletter Editor:** **Pauline Stewart Ph. (03) 5152 1606**  
**80 Bengworden Rd. Bairnsdale.3875**  
**email: [happycats@net-tech.com.au](mailto:happycats@net-tech.com.au)**

**All articles for Spring Clematis must be in by September 1st.**

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

1. To further the study of natural history in all its branches, promoted by periodical meetings, field excursions and other activities.
2. To observe and strengthen the laws for the preservation & protection of indigenous flora and fauna and habitat and important geological features.
3. To promote the formation and preservation of National and State Parks and Reserves.

### **APOLOGY**

As you would have noticed, the full moon dates in the 2010 calendar are incorrect. The information was taken from the Bureau of Meteorology website (the 2010 BOM weather calendar is also incorrect). However the website information has now been corrected. My apologies for the inconvenience.

*Jen Wilkinson, producer of the 2010 Bairnsdale & Dist. Field Naturalist Club calendar.*

***The calendar committee wish to advise that we are finishing production of our East Gippsland Nature in Focus .***

### **THANK YOU**

A big thank you goes to the photographers for contributing their beautiful views of East Gippsland's flora and fauna in our series of calendars. Thanks also to our printer *Egee Printers Bairnsdale* for their help and expertise and also the local retailers who have been very generous in allowing us to place our calendars (with very little mark up) on consignment in their shops.

We thank members for their support.

*Pauline Stewart*

*Calendar committee*



**Austral Tobacco (*Nicotiana suaveolens*)**

(see page 20)

Photo by James

## **RULES TO OBSERVE ON FIELD TRIPS:**

1. Excursions are cancelled on days of TOTAL FIRE BAN.
2. Participants to keep a visual on the car in front and behind.
3. When making a turn, give signal, and stay at intersection until following car has also turned.
4. If separated from other cars, stop, and stay with your car. Other members will return to find you.
5. Car pool passengers should offer a donation to the driver for fuel costs.

### **SUBSCRIPTION FEES**

Family membership	\$30
Single membership	\$20
Mid-year fee (new members only)	\$10

Responsibility for the accuracy of information and opinions expressed in this newsletter rests with the author of the article.

#### **LIBRARY INFORMATION - Librarian - Dot Prout Phone: 5153 1303**

- Books are generally borrowed for one month - however you can write on the sign-out sheet if you wish to have it longer.
- Should any library materials need maintenance, please make me aware of same.
- If you wish to recommend a book, this can be done by writing a short recommendation for the Clematis. This information could be from our library books or from other books that you believe our library could look at purchasing.

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**CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS and email address's for meetings and field trips.**

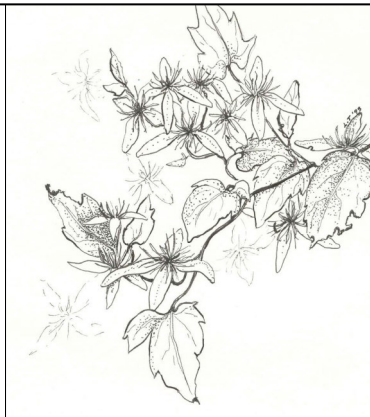
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**DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY FOR BUSH WALKS**

**Easy** Flat, good firm track.  
**Moderately easy** Mostly flat, track in good to fair condition  
**Moderate** May be undulating, track in good to fair condition  
**Mod. difficult** May be some steep sections, track may be rough in places  
**Difficult** May have long steep sections, track may be non-existent at times  
 Walks vary in distance from 6 to 14 km.  
 Contact the leader of the walk for a rating if it's not included in the program.

**Please take note of safety procedures in your Bairnsdale & District Field Naturalists Club Inc. 'RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY' booklet.**

The Clematis is printed and supported by Dept. of Sustainability and Environment, Bairnsdale.



Front Cover:  
 Antelope Greenhood (*Pterostylis laxa*)  
 (see page 16) Photo by James Turner

**FUNGI**

At the bottom of the garden where the weeds are, where the grass grows high and worms ooze in and out of holes undisturbed by prongs and sharp-edged spades. Where snails have found paradise and slimy slugs feel wanted and secure.

In the wild part of the woods where dead logs lie in peace and dank, dark leaves layer softly, like torn pages from ancient tomes, and spiders and ants go about their business oblivious of the curses cast upon them by larger, deadlier species.

Here, a million mysteries play unseen, even in the harsh light of day. Here, ominous scenes unfold in the cold of night deep within the moist, primordial mire.

Millions of miniscule spores pour their magic into the soil whispering seductive spells, conjuring threads, fine like silk, to grow from seemingly nothing.

Then, as if some sorcerer waved a wand, the threads spread out, weave in and out and wind about into weird and wondrous subterranean growths.

They hide there waiting for the first winter rains and a sun that's lost its sting. Then, when sad dry paddocks smile a sweet, young green and frog-song sways away the night - up pop the fungi!

How mysteriously magical these ground-hugging growths! Like a child on a treasure hunt I rush from clump to clump following their path like clues on a map, each "button" a bauble that must be possessed!

They draw me down to the level of the ground *Pretty Mouths* suck me in and *Earth Tongues* lick through leaf rot luring me with ancient tales of *Death Caps*, *Earth Stars*, *Stink Horns* and *Mottle Gills*, *Curry Punks*, *Fire Girls* and *Silver Tufts*, *Slimy Moulds* and *Web Veils*, *Morels* and frilly *Chantarelles*.

So simple and appealing these earthy inhabitants parading as caps, cups, parasols and bonnets, with gills and spines and spores and faces—but look out at night when *Ghosts* glow bright and *Ghouls* bite into bones, when *Jellies* tremble and others resemble tables for fairies and elves, when out of the wet wood's tiny crevasses *Ink Caps* dissolve into black slimy masses - for fungi aren't poppets but miniature rockets all set to inherit the Earth!

Molly Hall  
 (contributed by Ruth Cross's sister in WA)

these florets, with sometimes one or the other being absent, and these differences are used in the identification of different species of daisies. Hazel Pomaderris (*Pomaderris aspera*) is a small tree common in moister areas throughout the eastern ranges. It has large dark green leaves with impressed veins above and many stalked star-shaped hairs below, and clusters of pale yellow flowers. Two large shrubs were Austral Mulberry (*Hedycarya angustifolia*) which has opposite shiny toothed large leaves and pale yellow mulberry-like inedible fruits; and Hemp-bush (*Gynatrix pulchella*) with soft heart-shaped crenate leaves which are very hairy below. There was a large toadstool with a brown cap (15cm), bright yellow forked gills and a very short yellow stem. It stained blue-green when damaged and we believe it was *Phylloporus rhodoxanthus*. High up on the side of a eucalypt trunk was a bracket fungus White Punk (*Laetiporus portentosus*). This fungus causes white heart-rot on living eucalypts. It is pale brown above and the lower pored surface becomes white. The soft spongy flesh is attractive to some insect larvae. It is reported that aborigines used these brackets when smouldering to transport fire.

Eventually on Watts Creek Track on top of a ridge were a number of orchids. This seemed surprising as the understorey was very dry and scanty. Again we found Fisch's Greenhood, but also Small Mosquito Orchid (*Acianthus pusillus*), Tall Wasp-orchid (*Chiloglottis trilabra*); and Tiny Greenhood (*Pterostylis parviflora*). Tall Wasp-orchid used to be with the bird-orchids, but recently three species in Victoria have been differentiated and called wasp-orchids. They have a labellum which is wider towards its furthest edge (obovate), and many more shiny black calli on the labellum, and resemble the body of the female thynnid wasp. Tiny Greenhood lacks a stem-encircling basal rosette of leaves, but the rosette is sometimes present on a side shoot before or after flowering. This seems to be common among greenhoods. The flowering stalk grows to 25cm with up to 12 little green and white striped flowers. The tiny flowers are very erect with the sepals and petals reduced. The labellum is not visible. There was a small daisy with a basal rosette of palish green hairy lobed leaves with a number of greenish flower heads with thick stems. The disc florets were few and regular, and the many outer florets had set seed, with each having a feathery top, and there were no ray florets. This plant was *Solenogyne gunnii*. From here we were able to return home via a different route.

Thanks to James and also to Andrew for the fungi.



## PROGRAM JUNE TO SEPTEMBER 2010

**It is your responsibility to contact the co-ordinator of each field trip to notify them of your intention to participate.**  
The co-ordinator can then notify you if the trip has to be cancelled due to adverse weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances.

### JUNE

- No general meeting
- Sun. 20th. Monthly excursion 9.00am Bridge Club, 9.30 at Bruce's Track to the Colquhoun Forest and Metung Bushland Reserve.  
Contact: James Turner
- Sun. 27th. Bushwalk 9.00am Bridge Club, to Echo Bend, Mitchell River National Park. Rated: moderate  
Contact: Noel Williamson

### JULY

- No general meeting
- Sun. 18th. Monthly excursion, 9.00am Bridge Club, 9.15am Bruthen to the Bruthen area..  
Contact: James Turner
- Sun. 25th. Bushwalk 9.00am Bridge Club, 9.15am Bruthen to Big Creek, Mt. Little Dick area. Rated: Moderate. Distance: abt 10km  
Contact: Noel Williamson

### AUGUST

- No general meeting
- Sun. 22nd. Monthly excursion, 9.00am Bridge Club to Freestone Creek, Stockdale area.  
Contact: James Turner
- Sun. 29th. Bushwalk 9.00am Bridge Club to Chinese Diggings at Melwood  
Rated: Moderate Distance: abt 12km  
Contact: Noel Williamson

### SEPTEMBER

- Thurs. 9th. Committee meeting 4.00pm at Margaret Regan's home
- Frid. 17th. General meeting 7.30pm Speaker: TBA
- Sun 19th. Monthly excursion 9.00am Bridge Club, 9.45am Nowa Nowa to Hospital Creek area  
Contact: James Turner
- Sun. 26th. Bushwalk 9.00am Bridge Club to Holey Plains, south of Rosedale  
Rated: Moderate/easy Distance: 10-12km  
Contact: Noel Williamson

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

What a difference good rains and at least 123 days with the temperature not below 20 Celsius make to the flora of East Gippsland. Drought affected sites that we have recently visited are rich with orchids for the first time in years.

However, on a negative note we were dismayed on our latest excursion to Nun-niong Plateau to observe the damage caused by the feral horse population. In particular damage to alpine/sub-alpine bogs and plains and the plant community which inhabits them.

Your Committee has plans for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations well in hand, and your attention is drawn to the call for Expressions of Interest for the anniversary dinner which appears in this issue.

A final decision has been made not to proceed with the publication of future calendars. Why? The market is flooded with locally produced calendars nowadays, all of which are struggling for sales and the production costs of the 2010 edition exceeded returns and we can't justify taking that risk again.

However, as one door closes another opens. We have an exciting proposal on the drawing board, thanks to one of our members, Rob. Wood who is developing an electronic field guide of the flora and fauna observed by Club members on field excursions and recorded in the Clematis by Margaret Regan. Rob. made a Power-Point presentation

of the proposed format to the Committee and described the concept behind it and its further development. He will be repeating this to members at the first general meeting after the winter break.

The point needs to be made up-front; this project will be entirely dependent on contributions of members of the Club. Without your support and input it cannot go ahead. I am confident, given the outstanding photographic skills of our members and given the advent of digital cameras that we can photograph all specimens observed on our excursions from now on.

On a very, very sad note we record the death of our much loved and highly respected member Beth Isakson after a long and cruel debilitating illness. Beth made an enormous contribution to the Club and to the lives of those within it. These were reflected in a tribute we made at her Memorial Service on 9<sup>th</sup> April and which is printed in this edition of The Clematis.

Meetings are now in abeyance for the winter break, but the excursions and bush walks will continue.

Pat McPherson  
**President**

specimens of the Rainbow Fungus. This fungus has concentric bands of different colours. Are they growth rings, and if so, why are they different colours? There were many shades of brown and grey, but also some rings were blue! The undersurface is cream with many tiny pores in which the spores are produced. On another fallen branch was a brown leathery shelf-fungus *Stereum illudens* forming a crust over the branch. It has an upper hairy surface with concentric zones and a lower fertile smooth surface with a pale margin. All these fungi are breaking down the fallen timber on which they are growing. There was a Rooting Shank (*Xerula australis*) with a 10mm shiny taupe cap with white gills, tall white stalk and annulus. A minute parasol *Mycena* (4mm) was bright red. Unseen by most of us and therefore somewhat trampled by many feet were tiny bright Yellow tongue Corals (*Clavaria amoena*). These simple finger-like fertile structures were only 2-3cm high. No wonder we missed seeing them! A Spotted Pardalote call was identified. Further along Bentleys Plain Road in a stand of small pale-trunked Brittle Gum was the Sharp Midge-orchid (*Corunastylis despectans*). The midge-orchids have a single erect green cylindrical leaf through which the flowering stalk emerges through a slit near the top. The inflorescence is a dense spike of tiny dark insect-like flowers. The Sharp Midge-orchid has up to 40 purplish brown flowers. There was a clump of young *Gymnopilus* at the base of the white trunk of one of the gums. This fungus can grow quite large with caps to 40cm across. We heard Pied Currawong and Grey Shrike-thrush.

Onto FDA Track into a wet forest and down near a gully, the vegetation was completely different to that we had seen before. Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) with its gorgeous white trunks grew along the creek. Some other trees were grey feathery-leaved Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*), and the daisy Blanket Leaf (*Bedfordia arborescens*) whose large leaves are white and woolly beneath, and when dead often hang down, still on the tree. Blanket Leaf is named for a Duke of Bedford who was a patron of botany. The small yellow flower heads of the Blanket Leaf have no ray florets, only disc florets. A floret is a small complete flower, which exists with many others in a flower head, as in daisies. Most daisies have two different florets in their flower heads. In the centre are the disc or tubular florets which have five united similar petals with usually five lobes at the top. The ligulate or ray florets around the outside have a short tube of united petals which extends on the outer side into a flat strap-shaped part called the ray or ligule. There are many different combinations of

## ENSAY NORTH - 18 April 2010

by Margaret Regan

From Ensay we travelled along the Little River Road to Bentleys Plain Road which brought us into the Nunniong State Forest. Some way along we went left up a track which may become a diversion road. Just at the cars, where we were enjoying morning tea, was Fisch's Greenhood (*Pterostylis fischii*) which we had seen on the previous excursion near Wulgulmerang. It has a large upright green and white striped flower with reddish brown tonings and extended lateral sepals and galea. We heard the musical call of the Grey Butcherbird and the raspy croak of the Red Wattlebird. There were few other plants in flower except bright yellow Grey Guinea-flower (*Hibbertia obtusifolia*) and Bluebell (*Wahlenbergia* sp.). Because there had been some rain and autumn is their time for fruiting, during the day we saw quite a number of fungi. Here were two different coral fungi, possibly in the genus *Ramaria*, one was pale brown with pointed tips and the other was a pretty apricot with blunter tips. The fertile tissue covers all but the stem and in *Ramaria* the spores are yellow-brown. There was also a small Emperor Cortinar (*Cortinarius archeri*) which is an all purple gilled toadstool with a conspicuous annulus (ring around the stem) and rust-brown spores. A little further up the track beneath Yellow Box (*Eucalyptus melliodora*), Brittle Gum (*E. mannifera*), Red Stringybark (*E. macrorrhyncha*) and Gippsland Peppermint (*E. croajingolensis*), on a green damp slope were the tiny plants of Bristly Helmet-orchid (*Corybas hispidus*), whose heart-shaped leaf is green above and paler beneath; and Long-tongue Summer Orchid (*P. aestiva*). Birds were Kookaburra and Striated Pardalote. Some herbs were Showy Violet (*Viola betonicifolia*) with deep purple to violet flowers; Pale Everlasting (*Helichrysum rutidolepis*); a geranium with small pink flowers; and the purple pea Twining Glycine (*Glycine clandestina*). There were more fungi of course. A golden shining streaked capped gilled fungus with a gold stalk and annulus with mustard yellow spores deposited on it was *Gymnopilus junonius*. Also found were the bright Scarlet Bracket Fungus (*Pycnoporus coccineus*) and tiny Earth Tongues (*Geoglossum* sp.). The Earth Tongues look like a black match, with the fertile material (the spores) produced from the black shiny club at the top of the stalk.

Near a circle, after which the track was very overgrown, were more fungi. On a log lying on the ground were both the Scarlet Bracket and many

VALE

### BETH ISAKSON

Beth and her husband Harold became members of the Bairnsdale and District Field Naturalists Club in 1984. Beth was involved in very aspect of the club. She participated in meetings, excursions, bushwalks and camps. The first club memory of Beth and Harold was them turning up to an excursion to Reedy Creek, Cann River, in a camper van. Beth was a very efficient secretary for twelve years, and also publicity officer. Nothing in the club was too much trouble for her to tackle and she took secretarial challenges head-on. She coped with the introduction of Incorporation, which left the rest of us scratching our heads. A Risk Management Policy for club insurance was another bureaucratic nightmare that she helped sort out. Beth also mentored succeeding secretaries.

It's hard to think of enough superlatives to describe Beth. We all loved her. She looked out for everyone, but to some members of the club she was a special friend. Jenny Edwards remembers Beth's offer of storage space in her garage for precious personal belongings when their home at Bruthen was threatened by the 2003 bushfires. Beth always offered transport to meetings and excursions and hosted many guest speakers in her home.

Beth was also a lot of fun. She was the life of the party at camp outs. She was a very organized camper and had designed a small tent which fitted on the back of her 4WD with the tailgate down. At one memorable camp out at Eaglevale, the night came in cold and wet so with nothing else to do, everyone literally crammed into Beth's tent, right up onto her bedding in the back of the vehicle. Beth brought out the green ginger wine and someone else had Bailey's Irish Cream and as the night became warmer and more hilarious the tall stories became even taller. Our Field Nats. are very reluctant alcohol consumers but green ginger wine and lemonade has since become a favourite!

Beth had a deep and abiding love for the bush and the natural environs of Gippsland and was never happier than when exploring and enjoying it to the full with the Field Nats. Margaret Regan recalls that she and Beth shared the same level of fitness despite Beth being older and has memories of them both propped up against the same tree, breathing heavily, part way up a hill on a bushwalk

Beth was adventurous too. At seventy she decided that she was never going to be able to walk to see Lake Tarli Karng. Mandy Evans remembers her hiring a small plane to take herself and other Field Nats. to see this beautiful natural feature.

over→

The bush wasn't Beth's only passion. She loved gardening and pursued intellectual interests such as music and literature.

Pat McPherson remembers receiving a phone call from friends on a cattle station in North Western Australia to ask who wrote *Wind in the Willows*. Pat had no idea but she thought Beth might so she rang and received the answer straight away. Thanks to Beth, Pat was able to ring back and settle an argument at an outback dinner table.

Perhaps the last word should go to Jennifer Wilkinson who can't be here today when she says that words that come to mind when she thinks of Beth are: sincere, calm, gentle, cheery, always ready to help, welcoming, organized, thorough, conscientious, reliable and perceptive.

What a lady; what a caring friend; what a wonderful human being she was. We are all the poorer for her passing.

The Club extends deepest sympathy to Beth's family.



### **50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY DINNER EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

The Club will be holding a dinner to celebrate its 50th anniversary on

**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

The choice of venue will be dependent on numbers, so can you do two things? Either pencil that date into your diary now and make a commitment to it or put your long term thinking cap on and decide whether you can see your way clear to attend.

Please notify Margaret Regan of your decision by the start of June.

and Brown Treecreeper, and across the road at a small dam were Wood Ducks.

We turned onto the Dellicknora Road and stopped where it crossed the Bonang River to visit the Bonang River Falls. Near the bridge on powerlines were two Crested Pigeons. We followed the river downstream. It was lined with some lovely white-trunked Manna Gums (*Eucalyptus viminalis*). At the attractive falls the rock was quite wide with several drops, the highest that we could see from the top was maybe 5m. Just above the falls was Large Autumn and Antelope Greenhoods. There was also Urn Heath (*Melichrus urceolatus*), a shrub to 60cm with sharp blue-green leaves and creamy flowers in the leaf axils; and Prickly Broom-heath (*Monotoca scoparia*), a larger shrub with long tubular white flowers. White-throated Treecreeper and Red Wattlebird were heard.

A great long weekend, thanks to James for all the botanising and organising.



**Bonang River Falls**

Photo by James Turner



along the upper sides of the branches. A dense tree was Kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneus*) which mostly grows on rocky hills. It has leathery pointed leaves, bell-shaped cream and red flowers and large hard boat-shaped follicles. There was also a native tobacco, Austral Tobacco (*Nicotiana suaveolens*) with large lush leaves and large cream tomato-type flowers which exude a strong perfume at night. Maybe their pollinator is a moth. At the Running Creek and Deddick River junction again was White Cypress-pine (*Callitris columellaris*). The leaves are usually grey-green, much reduced, not keeled and appressed to the stem, and the solitary woody cones have five smooth cone scales. We had also been seeing Black Cypress-pine (*C. endlicheri*) whose leaves are much greener and keeled. Its cones are smaller, darker and spherical, and each cone scale has a small sharp projection near the tip. There were some interesting grasses, including a Niggerheads (*Enneapogon nigricans*) whose spikes look like a woolly caterpillar; and Barbed Wire Grass (*Cymbopogon refractus*). The Lemongrass of Thai cuisine is a *Cymbopogon* species. Because of their aromatic foliage, this genus of grasses is not palatable to stock. Other interesting plants were Narrow-leaf New Holland Daisy (*Vittadinia muelleri*), a low dense plant with long-stalked deep blue flower heads; Yellow Burr-daisy (*Calotis lappulacea*); Variable Glycine; a salt-bush with very bright large red fruits; the succulent Common Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) which is a semi-prostrate herb with red fleshy stems, thick, smooth, dark green, blunt leaves and yellow flowers; and Narrow rock-fern. On the edge of Running Creek were River Bottlebrush (*Callistemon sieberi*), a shrub or small tree to 3m with slightly drooping branches and cream or pink bottlebrushes; and Woolly Teatree (*Leptospermum lanigerum*) whose leaves are silvery-hairy beneath. Weeds were Wild Turnip (*Brassica rapa*) which has a basal rosette and tall flowering stems with many yellow flowers; and in the daisy family Tall Fleabane (*Conyza albida*) which is a native of North America. Another native which can be a weed in cultivation and pastures was Blue heron's-bill (*Erodium crinitum*) in the geranium family Geraniaceae. On the roadside rock face was a small (8cm) native colonial Paper Wasps' nest. There are 34 species of Paper Wasps in Australia and each nest can contain one to many hundreds of individuals. Each nest has one fertile queen and the rest are workers. The adults feed on nectar, but they hunt caterpillars to feed their larvae. Just past the Amboyne suspension bridge at an old house site we stopped to birdwatch again and saw Jacky Winter, Diamond Firetail, Red-browed Finch, Restless Flycatcher, Grey Fantail

## MARLO - 9 January 2010

by Margaret Regan

We travelled to our favourite spot for members of the genus *Cryptostylis*, the Tongue and Bonnet Orchids. Of the four members of this genus that are found in East Gippsland, three are found at Marlo. The Bonnet Orchid or Tartan Tongue-orchid (*C. erecta*) and the Large Tongue-orchid (*C. subulata*) have upright ovate green leaves. The Leafless Tongue-orchid (*C. hunteriana*) has no leaves. It is a saprophyte, and gets its nutrition from decaying plant material, probably in association with a fungus. We find these orchids near the Marlo airport. It was a bad day to be doing our annual count. The temperature was over 40°C, with a northerly wind and no shade. The vegetation is wet heath. Other plants in this heath were the small Scrub Sheoak (*Allocasuarina paludosa*) which only grows to 3m, but was much shorter in this environment; the pea Golden Spray (*Viminaria juncea*) with pendulous, almost leafless branches; Spear Grass-tree (*Xanthorrhoea resinosa*); yellow Swamp Goodenia (*Goodenia humilis*), a dwarf rosetted perennial; Blue Dampiera (*Dampiera stricta*); pink Heath Milkwort (*Comesperma ericinum*) with pea-like flowers with 5 sepals resembling petals and 3 petals, and is in the family Polygalaceae; pale mauve tiny-flowered Angled Lobelia (*Lobelia anceps*); Spreading Rope-rush (*Empodisma minus*); Zig-zag Bog-rush (*Schoenus brevifolius*); and Horned Orchid (*Orthoceras strictum*) with tall flowering stems bearing greenish-brown flowers with a hooded dorsal sepal, long erect lateral sepals (the horns), a brown labellum with a central yellow patch and tiny hidden petals. Two non-flowering plants were Screw fern (*Lindsaea linearis*), a tiny plant with fan-shaped pinnae on the sterile fronds and erect narrow fertile fronds bearing the spores along the outer margins of the pinnae; and Swamp selaginella (*Selaginella uliginosa*), a lycopod with tiny stiff leaves arranged in four rows around the stem. The spores are borne in sporangia at the tips of the branches, loosely arranged in cones. We only found two open Bonnet Orchids and one in bud. The flowers of *Cryptostylis* are held upside-down and have large colourful labellums. In the Bonnet Orchid, the leaf is pale green on one side and purplish on the other. The labellum forms a hood which is translucent white with purple stripes. There were also Leafless Tongue- and Large Tongue-orchids. The erect labellum of the Leafless Tongue-orchid is reddish-purple with a raised central callus. The leaves of the Large Tongue-orchid are green on both surfaces. Its labellum is held out and down with the margins curved up

and the surface has two long purple ridges ending in a bilobed callus. This is only seen from below. The leaves of the Tongue-orchids were often found growing protected near the heart of the Grass-trees.

At Point Riccardo further east along the Marlo Conran Road behind the primary dune was Rosy Hyacinth-orchid (*Dipodium roseum*). This spectacular leafless orchid has a flowering stalk to 100cm with up to 50 pale pink flowers with darker pink spots. The labellum has darker stripes and pink hairs.

Detouring off onto the Marlo Plains Road we stopped for a very welcome cooling lunch break at Bill and Helen Kosky's holiday house. After this we travelled further east along the Old Coast Road and 2.6 km east of the Cabbage Tree Conran Road beneath Red Ironbark (*Eucalyptus tricarpa*) which has very dark deeply furrowed bark and Saw Banksia (*Banksia serrata*) was the very pretty purple Hairy Fan-flower (*Scaevola ramosissima*), Woolly Xanthosia (*Xanthosia pilosa*) with trifoliate lobed hairy leaves, and absolutely peculiar Elbow Orchids (*Thynninorchis huntianus*). The Elbow Orchid is a leafless saprophytic orchid which grows in leaf litter. It grows to 15cm with up to eight small flowers. These upside-down flowers have a mobile labellum on a long stalk connected to an extension of the column, thus forming a hinge, and the labellum is covered with long hairs and warty calli, which makes the flower look insect-like. The petals and sepals are tiny and reflexed back against the ovary. The column which contains the packets of pollen and the stigma, has prominent wings which serve to hold the wasp pollinator against the column, where its body picks up the sticky packets of pollen. The new generic name for the Elbow Orchids (*Thynninorchis*) is derived from the thynnine wasp which pollinates these orchids through pseudocopulation. There had been many Elbow Orchid plants along this roadside, but despite the authorities being notified that the plants were there, and needed protection, they had just been slashed.

About 2km further east along the road were Large Duck-orchids (*Caleana major*) (to 50cm), which is another orchid with a bizarre flower. The flowers are also upside-down with a sensitive smooth labellum which is propelled between the column wings by the visits of insects. There was again the Leafless Tongue-orchid. Maybe another 2km east again was a plain with Scrub Sheoak; Spike Goodenia (*Goodenia stelligera*) whose

long point. Another orchid was Small Mosquito-orchid (*Acianthus pusillus*) which has a single heart-shaped leaf, a stalk to 20cm and up to 12 tiny flowers with a dorsal sepal to 12mm. There was the daisies, white *Bra-chyscome aculeata* with simple leaves halfway up the stem and no basal rosette; mauve Rock Daisy; a yellow Groundsel (*Senecio* sp.); finished Pale Vanilla-lily (*Arthropodium milleflorum*); yellow Hop Goodenia (*Goodenia ovata*); and Diggers' Speedwell (*Derwentia perfoliata*) which has opposite large blue-green ovate leaves joined at their bases and sprays of lilac flowers. Diggers' Speedwell is typical of rocky gold-bearing country. Presumably this is how its common name arose.

At Ballantyne's Gap were more plants of the Large Autumn Greenhood. There was also lots of Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*) and again masses of Pale Vanilla-lily, most of which had finished flowering. A pea was Slender Tick-trefoil (*Desmodium gunnii*), a small trailing plant with rounded leaflets on the trifoliate leaves and pink flowers. Its seeds stick to your clothing as a ticks adheres to your skin!! Another pea was Variable Glycine (*Glycine tabacina*), a twining plant with trifoliate leaves and purple flowers. We drooled over the perfume of the tiny white flowers of Sweet Hound's-tongue (*Cynoglossum suaveolens*). Again we saw New Holland Daisy and also another daisy Indian Weed (*Sigesbeckia orientalis*) which is not a weed at all. Indian Weed is stiff, erect and branched with thin triangular leaves and tiny yellow flower heads and also has sticky seeds. What a great dispersal mechanism!! A fern in this dry area was Narrow rock-fern (*Cheilanthes sieberi*).

On the morning of our day of leaving Deddick, there seemed to be heaps of birds around. We saw or heard White-backed Magpie, Pied Currawong, Raven, Brown and White-throated Treecreeper, Superb Fairywren, Red-browed Finch, Diamond Firetail, Yellow-tufted Honeyeater, Rufous Whistler, Peaceful Dove, Silvereye, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Jacky Winter, Eastern Yellow Robin, a young Robin (probably Scarlet) and Yellow-rumped Thornbill.

About 3km along the road to Bonang which follows the Deddick River and is still in White Box woodland, we stopped to see the rare Slender Boobialla (*Myoporum floribundum*) which is found in Victoria only on dry slopes in rain shadow areas of the Upper Snowy and Deddick Rivers. It is a shrub to 3m with often drooping branches with white flowers clustered

*fischii*) in flower. It has a stiffly erect, tawny coloured flower and the labellum is not visible from the outside, unlike those of the Antelope and Long-tongue Summer Greenhoods. Cranberry Heath (*Astroloma humifusum*), of course, was bearing its small red tubular flowers; and there was a very small Pomaderris (*Pomaderris* sp.) with completely revolute (rolled under) leaf margins. We left the cars at the junction of Rocky Range Track (which leads to World End Spur!!) and Milky Creek Track, and walked along Rocky Range Track to look for a lost camera, which was easily found (one vanilla slice promised in payment!!). Here was Bristly Helmet-orchid (*Corybas hispidus*). This was a new site, but it had not been seen flowering in this area since 2007. The Bristly Helmet-orchid has the largest flowers of any Victorian helmet-orchid. The circular labelum has coarsely toothed margins and a white lamina covered with short stiff hairs. Other orchids were Small Mosquito-orchid (*Acianthus pusillus*), Long-tongue Summer and Antelope Greenhoods and Scarlet Greenhood (*Pterostylis coccinea*) which has a very upright large reddish flower. A Lyrebird was heard singing.

Back to Wulgulmerang and then north to Mt Hamilton. Here we again saw Fisch's and Long-tongue Summer Greenhoods; also Pale Everlasting (*Helichrysum rutidolepis*), Showy Violet (*Viola betonicifolia*) and Bluebells (*Wahlenbergia* sp.). There were lovely drifts of Bluebells along much of the roadsides. Two gilled fungi were a whitish stout one with a deep frilly annulus and a slender one with a shiny grey-brown cap which was striated around the edge. Opposite the spectacular Hanging Rock and about 2km toward Suggan Buggan from Mt Hamilton was again Long-tongue Summer Greenhood, and also the delicate prostrate Necklace fern (*Asplenium flabellifolium*). It has fan-shaped pinnae and the spores are in elongated sori along the veins below the pinnae. In the road gutter beneath the steep upside of the road an animal appeared to have been digging and had created a small waterhole with water. In this really dry environment, it seemed to be a very smart exercise, and no doubt other animals and birds would have benefited from this industry. We heard Spotted Pardalote and a Lyrebird in the distance appearing to go through its imitations of other birds. We had a spectacular, if brief, view of a Wedgetail Eagle gliding quite close and quite low over the road. About another 2km down the road and up the steep bank was Large Autumn Greenhood (*Pterostylis* sp.aff. *revoluta*). The large green and white striped flower has reddish tones and stripes towards the apex, and the long curved labellum ends in a

yellow flowers are in an erect terminal spike with the outsides of the petals covered with brown hairs; Prickly Geebung (*Persoonia juniperina*), a shrub to 2m with yellow grevillea-like flowers and yellowish-green to purplish edible fruits; and Rush Lily (*Sowerbaea juncea*), a tufted perennial with a cluster of mauve flowers; where we found five more Leafless Tongue-orchids.

Around a corner and opposite a Cape Conran Coastal Park sign were Large Duck-orchids, Small Duck-orchids (*Paracaleana minor*) and Rosy Hyacinth Orchids. Small Duck-orchids have a stem to 18cm with up to 7 upside-down flowers. The labellum is also sensitive and covered with dark shiny calli.

On the Sydenham Inlet Road which goes south to Bemm River, north of the Old Coast Road on the west side of the road was a Grass-tree plain with Silver-leaf Stringybark (*Eucalyptus conspicua*), a small tree with contorted branches, rough and persistent bark and grey-green leaves.



Thanks to James and Bill Kosky, a keen orchid chaser in his home territory.



**Small Duck Orchid**  
(*Paracaleana minor*)

Photo by Fran Bright

## NUNNIONG - 21 February 2010

by Margaret Regan

Near Buchan we turned west onto Timbarra Road. Waiting at the corner for the rest of the party, we observed a family of White-winged Choughs in a paddock searching for food in the pasture. Along Timbarra Road we turned right into Nunnet Road and then right again into Mellick Munjie Road. Just past Last Straw Road at Paddy's Link there was a dam with Entire Marshwort (*Nymphoides montana*) flowering. This aquatic herb has long petioles raising their leaves to the surface of the water. The almost circular leaves have a notch where the petioles are attached and sit flat on the surface of the water. The petals of the yellow flowers have fringed margins. We were fortunate to be there when a breeze blew across the surface of the dam, lifting the edges of the floating leaves and revealing their burgundy-coloured undersurfaces. It was a lovely phenomenon. There were some weeds - Blue Pigroot (*Sisyrinchium iridifolium*), a iris which is native to Mexico and South America, with cream flowers with prominent purplish-brown veins; and the yellow daisy Cat's Ear or Flat-weed (*Hypochoeris radicata*).

Turning right yet again into Mundys Plain Track we took a track off to Mundys Plain. There were actually two adjoining plains. Unfortunately these interesting plains with a rare Eyebright, and others we saw later in the day, all showed signs of Brumby and Sambar Deer damage and scats. Why are these feral animals still being tolerated in these fragile environments? The rare Eyebright is Yellow or Rough Eyebright (*Euphrasia scabra*). It is a herb to 50cm covered with coarse short hairs and glandular hairs, looking rather like Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum*), which is in the same family, Scrophulariaceae. The common name seems to have originated from an exotic Eyebright (*E. officianalis*) whose seeds were placed in eyes, and the mucilage produced cleared the eyes. There was also the rare Marsh Daisy (*Brachyscome radicans*). In Victoria this daisy is known only from swampy ground on or near Nunniong Plateau and along Morass Creek, near Benambra. These two plants were growing out in the damp plain. Around the drier edges was Small-fruit Hakea (*Hakea microcarpa*); White Mountain Baeckea (*Baeckea utilis*); the daisies, a yellow Groundsel (*Senecio* sp.) and yellow Pale Everlasting (*Helichrysum rutidolepis*); the small single-flowered lily Golden Weather-glass (*Hypoxis hygrometrica*); Gunn's Willow-herb (*Epilobium gunnianum*) which has a pod-like ovary

warts fall off, leaving a smooth brown thin wall with an apical pore through which the spores are released - fun to puff!! Birds heard were Spotted Pardalote and White-eared Honeyeater

After a slightly scary ride down McKillops Road (it is very narrow in some parts with a big drop-off on one side) we crossed the Snowy River at McKillop's Bridge. The bridge is very elevated above the river, which is a blessing as the weeds I remembered from my last trip could not be seen! On the east side was an information shelter with an explanation of the rain shadow effect. This area is East Gippsland's driest place; it is next to one of its wettest. Mt Gelantipy forms a barrier to the prevailing SW winds and air is forced to rise over it. As air rises it cools. Clouds form, and rain may fall on the windward side and the top of the mountain. After passing over the mountain, the now dry air mass descends and warms.

We travelled on to Kurrajong in Deddick, our house for the two nights. There was enough room in the back yard for the campers. The very well-equipped house for six is just across the road from the Deddick River which flows back down to the Snowy. We were next door to the property Deddick Springs, and discovered that there was to be a big camp draft there the next weekend. Water was being pumped up to fill several dams. These were to satisfy the thirst of the 900 cattle which were being driven down from Gelantipy the next Wednesday. Were we glad we didn't meet them on the road!! Presumably the poor animals were going to be chased around and terrified all weekend, and then driven back up the road again the following week! Nearby were many Sulphur-crested Cockatoos roosting.

On Sunday we drove back up the scary road to the Little River Falls again, where we met an Australian Native Orchid Society member and five more of our Field Nats. We went to view the falls themselves which are very pretty and drop off into a steep gully. Down the track were the daisies Leafy Daisy (*Brachyscome rigidula*) which has divided leaves and pink or blue flower heads; Fuzzy New Holland Daisy (*Vittadinia cuneata* var. *cuneata*); and Pale Everlasting (*Helichrysum rutidolepis*); and the pea Mat-ted Bossiaea (*Bossiaea buxifolia*), a tiny spreading shrub with small stiff leaves arranged fan-like and yellow and brown ("egg and bacon" flowers. We travelled back up the Milky Creek Track, this time by car, which was a very rough ride. This time we saw Fisch's Greenhood (*Pterostylis*

## DEDDICK CAMP-OUT - March 20-22nd. 2010

by Margaret Regan



A group of eight hardy Field Nats headed out for Deddick. Our first stop for botanising was near the Little River Falls where we walked up the steep 4-wheel drive Milky Creek Track east of the bridge at the falls. Part way up the track we saw some of the greenhoods we were searching for. There was Antelope Greenhood (*Pterostylis laxa*), whose single green and white striped flower with reddish brown tones has long slender sepals with the lateral sepals bent over or lax; Long-tongue Summer Greenhood (*P. aestiva*) whose large flower is white and blue-green striped, again with long slender lateral sepals which are held erect; and in bud Fisch's Greenhood (*P. fischii*). "Aestival" is Latin for 'summer'. The rare Rock Daisy (*Brachyscome petrophila*) has a single mauve flower and lobed leaves part way up the stem. Another daisy was the minute Blue Bottle-daisy (*Lagenophora stipitata*). It has bottle-shaped fruits. Despite this White Box (*Eucalyptus alba*) woodland being a rain shadow area, there had been rain recently and the ground layer was quite green. This also meant that there were a large number of fungi around. A very stout cream toadstool had a warty cap about 10cm across and an annulus still remaining on the stalk. There was a deep orange velvety gilled fungus which was not yet open. Another was very tall, the cream stalk was slender and about 15cm long, the 6cm cap was shiny brown and the gills were cream. This was likely a Rooting Shank (*Xerula australis*) whose common name refers to the long tapering, root-like underground extension of the stem. There were plenty of tiny cream warty puffballs. As the puffballs mature the

below the 4-petalled pale pink flower; purple Showy Violet (*Viola betonicifolia*); a deep pink Triggerplant (*Stylidium armeria*); Mountain clubmoss (*Lycopodium fastigiatum*) with clubs; and in the lavender family Lamiaceae, purple Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*) with flowers in cone-shaped terminal clusters, which always get confused with Austral Bugle (*Ajuga australis*) with its purple flowers encircling the stems at the leaf bases. There were lots of Common Field Mushrooms (*Agaricus campestris*).

The forest around had an overstorey of Messmate (*Eucalyptus obliqua*), Mountain Grey Gum (*E. cypellocarpa*), Black Sallee (*E. stellulata*), Gippsland Peppermint (*E. croajingolensis*), Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*) and Silver Wattle (*A. dealbata*). Shrubs included Mountain Pepper (*Tasmannia lanceolata*) with hot spicy leaves and black berries, now sold as bush tucker; Banyalla (*Pittosporum bicolor*) with long yellow berries which open to expose bright red sticky seeds; and Mountain Beard-heath (*Acrothamnus hookeri*) which also has red berries. Herbs included a large Bluebell (*Wahlenbergia* sp.), a large yellow Everlasting (*Xerochrysum* sp.) and the Dark-tip Greenhood (*Pterostylis atrans*) whose flower is green and white striped with an often red-brown galea to 15mm long. A creeper with purple berries was Purple Apple-berry (*Billardiera macrathera*). Unfortunately we also saw Blackberries (*Rubus* sp.). Some fungi were gilled with a light brown cap about 8cm across with a darker pimple in the centre. There was the sound everywhere of tiny crickets.

Further north on Mellick Munjie Road we went left into Moss Bed Track and walked up a small track on the left to another plain covered with Peat Moss (*Sphagnum* sp.) with rushes, sedges, and grasses. The Peat Moss was formed into mounds, and when the mounds were high enough, sometimes small trees had taken root. Again in this delicate environment, the hooves of brumbies were evident. Around in the edge of the wet area was Waxberry (*Gaultheria appressa*) which has pendant white flowers, and after the petals fall, the five sepals enlarge to form a berry-like envelope for the seeds; and Rough or Sandpaper Coprosma (*Coprosma hirtella*), a unisexual shrub to 2m with broad rough leaves and clustered red berries.

Near the corner of Wheatfield Road and Murphys Creek Track was a grassy plain to the north. The creek on the lower side was lined with Peat Moss. Other herbaceous plants were Pale Everlasting, Slender Speedwell

(*Veronica gracilis*), dainty little perennial with blue 4-petalled flowers, and the gorgeous deep blue Royal Bluebell (*Wahlenbergia gloriosa*). A dense shrub was white Swamp or Alpine Heath (*Epacris paludosa*). Most of the plants seem to have flowered earlier than normal this year. We were delighted to see a rare sight - a fungus called a Stinkhorn. The Stinkhorns have bizarre forms with strong nasty smells. The spore-producing structure develops inside an egg-like sac that is broken by the growth of the structure. The one we saw was bright red with four arms covered with spore-dispersing flies. The spores are borne in a foul-smelling brown slime which attracts flies and other insects. The spores are spread after they pass through the insect. This species *Clathrus archeri* is most common in alpine plains and woodland and may have different numbers of arms, some with divided tips. There was a bright green grasshopper with yellow and black stripes and a bronze iridescent beetle. There were also croaky Gang Gang Cockatoos.

Just down Nunning Road we again found the Dark-tip Greenhood. Late in the day we stopped for afternoon tea at Moscow Villa, intending to scout around after tea. It started to rain, so we set off down to Ensay, only to be confronted by an enormous tree across the road in the pouring rain. It was much too big to contemplate chain-sawing. We therefore had to turn back and come home via Bindi and Swifts Creek, which meant we were rather late home, after a very interesting day. Thank you, James.

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**Scarlet Greenhood (*Pterostylis coccina*)**

Photo by Fran Bright