

# RINGWOOD FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Reg.No. A9601

Website home.vicnet.net.au/~rfnc

OFFICE BEARERS 2008/2009**President**

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**P.O. BOX 418, RINGWOOD, Vic. 3134****Committee**

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**Organisation**

Subscriptions due and payable in September of each year. One Member  
 - **\$20.00** Additional Family Member - **\$10.00** Students - **\$5.00**

**Accessories**Club Mugs - **\$10.00**Club Badges - **\$5.00**Car Stickers (Badge Type) - **\$1.00****Regular Meetings**

**7.30 p.m.** on second Wednesday in each month in Room 4 at Maroondah  
 Federation Estate, Greenwood Ave, Ringwood (Melways 49 H10)

**Excursions**

Usually on weekends following general meetings

**NOTE:**

(a) No dogs on Field Excursions please.

(b) Limit is **six** images/slides per member on Meeting Nights

(c) Club Library. A free service to Members at Meeting.

**PROGRAMME For November 2008 - April 2009**

(Subject to alteration by notification at General Meetings)

**NOTE:**

Meetings will be cancelled on any nights when POWER RESTRICTIONS in the area are in force.

Field excursions will be cancelled on days of TOTAL FIRE BANS in the proposed excursion areas.

12<sup>th</sup> November  
(Wednesday evening) **GENERAL MEETING NO. 568.**  
Outdoor Meeting:  
Stiggants Reserve, Warrandyte (Melways 23 C12), BBQ facilities available or picnic tea, mealtime 6.00pm, meeting to follow.  
NOTE: A walk will be lead by Alan & Hazel Veevers, meet at 4.00pm near the toilets at Pound Bend (Melways 23 A11)

15<sup>th</sup> November  
(Saturday) **EXCURSION: Yea wetlands**  
Meet at 10.30am at John Cummins Reserve.  
(Melways 610 Q8 or Vic Roads Country Directory 61 H5)  
Leader – Graeme Fernandes

10<sup>th</sup> December  
(Wednesday evening) **GENERAL MEETING NO. 569.**  
Member's night:  
Parrot video – Ray Wall,  
Volcanos in Hawaii – Roger Needham,  
Cane Toads the pest – Alison Rogers  
Member slides/images – limit 6 per member  
Members please bring a plate of supper.

14<sup>th</sup> January  
(Wednesday evening) **GENERAL MEETING NO. 570**  
Speaker: Lynda Chambers  
"The Little Penguin"

17<sup>th</sup> January  
(Saturday)

**EXCURSION: Mt Baw Baw**  
Meet at 10.30am at picnic ground in Tanjil Bren (via Noojee).  
Vic Roads Country Directory Map 81 D7  
Leaders – Alan & Hazel Veevers

11<sup>th</sup> February  
(Wednesday evening)

**GENERAL MEETING NO. 571.**  
Speaker – Prof. Robert King  
"Plant Life in Arid Conditions"

14<sup>th</sup> February  
(Saturday)

**EXCURSION: Yellingbo Reserve**  
Meet at 10.00am, 2.5 km along the Macclesfield Rd from the Beenak Rd end. (Melways 305 G11) Turn right at large pine trees and enter through the gate. Bring lunch.  
Leader – Maryanne Anderson

11<sup>th</sup> March  
(Wednesday evening)

**GENERAL MEETING NO. 572.**  
Speaker – Marlene Lyell  
"Pelagic & Tasmanian Birds"

14<sup>th</sup> March  
(Saturday)

**EXCURSION: Newport Lakes & Jawbone Reserve**  
Meet at 10.30am at Newport Lakes Carpark, toilets in carpark. Lunch at junction of Maddox Rd & Greg Reserve Rd, afternoon walk at Jawbone Reserve  
(Melways 55 P8)  
Leader – Alan & Hazel Veevers

20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>  
March (Friday – Monday)

**WEEKEND AWAY**  
SEANA Autumn Camp hosted by Warrnambool FNC to be held at Port Fairy. Information & booking forms from Hazel Veevers

8<sup>th</sup> April  
(Wednesday evening)

**GENERAL MEETING NO. 573.**  
Speaker – Ruth Christensen  
"Townsville to the Tip"

19<sup>th</sup> April  
(Sunday)

**EXCURSION: Birdsland Reserve, Belgrave Heights**  
Meet at 10.00am, picnic lunch to follow morning walk.  
(Melways 84 B2)  
Leaders – Alison and Peter Rogers

Life Members Doug & Ella Thomas admiring ferns at Badger Weir



*Mycena interrupta*

Photos: Alison Rogers

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NOTE:

Ringwood Field Naturalists Club May Camp. To be held in St Arnaud area – date yet to be determined.

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# 'THE RINGWOOD FIELD NATURALIST' CLUB NEWSLETTER



Issue No. 27    October, 2008

EDITORIAL: Members wishing to expand their knowledge on a particular topic in natural history have available to them the extensive resources of the Club's library. It is hoped that the library will become more readily accessible in the near future with permanent storage at Federation Estate. The collection of periodicals contains articles on an extremely diverse range of subjects. After conducting research on your chosen topic, there is then the opportunity of sharing your interest by participating in a Members' Night. These are generally held twice a year, when two or three members deliver a short address on a subject not normally covered in the program. If you would be prepared to participate in the program in this way, you are invited to make contact with a member of the Club's Committee.

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*Members with Joan Hales investigating finds on the reef at Eagle's Nest, Inverloch Weekend May 2008*

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## PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008



We must be doing something right. We keep coming back for more. In addition we have gained a few new members who are enjoying the friendship and knowledge being shared. Of further note, several outside speakers have mentioned what a great and responsive group we are and that our Club is what being a field naturalist is about.

On this note, once again our program was of a high standard and provided a wide range of topics from quality speakers. Topics included wombats, Victorian snakes and lizards, the Western Treatment Plant, an outback odyssey, ferns of eastern Victoria, local fungi, change in the local environment and the fascinating world of spiders. All were well received and generated discussion and interest. The December member's night was a wrap-up of the spring weekend field trip to the Grampians. Members also provided excellent talks for the June members' night. In this we need to make special thanks to Alison Rogers and Marion King for the huge efforts in making our programs so successful.

We undertook 2 weekend field trips. Our first was in the spring to the Grampians. 32 members and visitors attended and enjoyed wonderful scenery, plants, birds, orchids and geology, with plenty of marvellous photos taken. Our second trip in the autumn saw 17 members stay at Inverloch and travel to Wilson's Promontory for a wonderful Saturday field trip. A highlight on Sunday was the ramble over the reef looking for marine life. Our regular field trips were again varied and interesting featuring local areas Jumping Creek, Bateman's Reserve Wantirna, 100 Acres in Park Orchards and Hampton Park. Our far away trips continue to generate interest with the Club travelling to Lake Mountain, the Western Treatment Plant, Mt Worth State Park, Fernshaw & Dom Dom Saddle and of course our breakfast with the birds at Badger Weir. Once again, thanks to all those who helped make the field trips the success they were. Again this year we participated in our field care days. Thanks to those who participated at either Warrandyte State Park or Hochkins Ridge Reserve.

Reports from all our activities appear in our 6 monthly newsletters. Thanks to Judith Cooke for her time and efforts in preparing this publication.

Members have also made our meetings. Field reports are wide and varied and the member slide segment is blossoming especially with quality digital images. We are indebted to David Hewitt for his time and efforts, and patience with us all, in loading images and then providing the technical expertise to show them.

As always the Committee members have made major contributions to the running of the Club. A special thanks to Ray Wall for his work as Treasurer, not only for the running of the Club finances, but also for his work with the upcoming SEANA weekend. Thanks also to Loris Peggie for again undertaking the role of auditor.

## PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008 (cont)

Speaking of the SEANA weekend, thanks to all members of the sub-committee who have been working extremely hard over the last 12 months to ensure this weekend will be a success.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a special thanks to Phil Daniell. He has been a driving force behind promoting the Club throughout regional libraries. Phil arranges a suitable time and, sometimes with the assistance of others, sets up a display featuring the Club and natural history. He also ensures the libraries have a stock of Club pamphlets to be collected by the public. This has generated a small amount of interest in the Club with a couple of new members signing up as a result. Again, thank you Phil.

Let's keep up the good work.

Peter Rogers

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Field Trip to Mt Worth 13<sup>th</sup> April 2008

by Leader - Judith Cooke

Sixteen members and two visitors met in the Moonlight Creek car-park for the April excursion. A group of people were working to repair recent storm damage and the tracks were clear of debris. Dark clouds and light drizzle cleared as we set off for the walk around the Giant's Circuit. The main objective was to study and identify the numerous species of ferns growing in the area. Our investigations revealed the diversity of frond shapes and the variety of patterns in the spore-producing structures. Scanned and printed copies of fertile fronds from local species assisted with identification. There were also several plants of *Fieldia australis* in flower.

The bird-watchers in the group sighted a number of birds, including a lyrebird, and several species not previously recorded on field trips there. We returned to the car-park in time for a picnic lunch together under the trees.

In the afternoon we walked through the picnic area and along the Moonlight Creek Track, where we examined several fungi species and added to the bird list. After an hour or so we crossed onto the Moonlight Divide Track and returned to the cars where we took a few moments to pool our experiences. Then we departed for the journey home after a successful day. Eighteen species of fern were identified and eighteen bird species were seen or heard. More than 35 different fungi were also recorded, most identified at least to genus.



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS (CONT)

### Field Trip to Jumping Creek, 15 May 2008

Leader – Bruce Fuhrer

Around 15 members gathered at Sandy Bay car-park to join our leader, Bruce, for our fungi foray. A preliminary check of the area was not particularly promising after little rain in previous weeks. We set off to circle the car-park and initially had to work hard to find the few species of fungi scattered about. We then followed the main track for some distance without much success. However, when we left the track and worked our way through the bush towards the river track we began to have more luck.

Soon we were finding all sorts of different fungi and Bruce was kept busy identifying them as we tried to recognise and remember the distinguishing features of each specimen. Many of us were able to examine species we had never seen before. When we reached the river track we followed it back to the car-park. In all, we found approximately 45 different species of fungi, at the same time noting several mosses and lichens and, of course, a few nice birds, including a Bassian Thrush, as well. Many thanks to Bruce for a successful and exciting morning. Some members stayed for a warming cuppa before making the trip home.

Mosses and lichens identified included: *Brutelia affinis*, *Hypnum cupressiforme*, *Polytrichum juniperinum*, *Thuidiopsis furfurosa*, *Dawsonia longiseta*, *Ptychomnion aciculare*, *Pseudocleropodium purum* (weed), *Cladonia* sp, (lichen).



### Autumn Weekend at Inverloch – 24-25 May 2008

Leaders: Saturday - Lynn and Neil Smith, Sunday - Roger and Inta Needham

#### Report on trip to Wilson's Prom 24<sup>th</sup> May 2008

by Lynn Smith

On Saturday 17 members gathered at Five Mile car park at Wilson's Promontory. We traipsed along the track to Miller's Landing through banksias and stringybark woodland observing the flowering pink and white heath (*Epacris impressa*) and *Acacia suaveolens*. Many fungi were examined along the sandy path. A lovely view across the white mangroves to the sandy coast was our turning point and we retraced our steps to the car park for morning tea. On our way to Whisky Bay we passed several kangaroos and emus, plus a fox. At Whisky Bay we walked to the beach passing flowering *Banksia integrifolia* with a New Holland Honeyeater busy in the flowers, also Dusty Miller (*Spyridium parvifolium*) and *Correa reflexa* flowering. Hard Water Fern (*Blechnum wattsii*) and Scrambling Coral Fern (*Gleichenia microphylla*) were in a damp patch at the side of the path. The sea was a lovely blue, reflecting the bright blue sky and rocks, shells, birds and jellyfish were examined by interested members. Our lunch stop was here with White-browed Scrubwren and tiny red sundews under foot.

cont

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS (CONT)

### Autumn Weekend at Inverloch – 24-25 May 2008 (cont)

Then we drove on to Lilly Pilly Gully car park. We wandered down the Lilly Pilly Gully walk finding more fungi and orchids to identify and Lilly Pilly trees with fruit. Back at the car-park we crossed the road and followed the Tidal River track overlooking Tidal River where we saw Pacific Black Duck. We enjoyed watching a grey wombat (Inta's moving rock) from the bridge. After discussion, the wombat was determined to be a female with young in pouch. Flowers along this track included *Correa reflexa*, *Correa alba*, *Hibbertia*, and more pink heath in a variety of shades from salmon to pink.

After returning to our cars we returned to Inverloch where we met for tea and related our exciting day at the Prom.



### Report on trip to Eagle's Nest, Screw Creek and Bald Hills 25<sup>th</sup> May 2008

by Roger Needham

On Sunday, 15 members plus invited local naturalist Joan Hales gathered in the carpark at Eagle's Nest, 7 kilometers west of Inverloch in Bunurong Marine National Park. After a brief introduction, the group headed down the 120 steps to the shore platform to discover the life which exists there.

Wearing gumboots and carrying a bucket, a net, plastic containers and a camera, Joan Hales led us to the water's edge and proceeded to turn over rocks and point out many of the coastal invertebrates which live in the area. One of the first animals she spied, which looked to me like a piece of flotsam or jetsam, was a Holothurian or sea cucumber. No sooner had she laid it out on her hand than it inverted its stomach, apparently as a defence mechanism. Fortunately for the animal it is able to grow another stomach. What a dramatic introduction for us to the shore platform!

Over the next 90 minutes spent on the shore platform, more than 20 different coastal invertebrates were discovered, although not all could be positively identified. A list of the 20 which could be identified is provided in Nature Notes. Some members explored the rock platform which contains the sea stack known as Eagle's Nest, while Graham Fernandes cast his eyes skyward and was rewarded by sighting a number of sea birds. Most of us were lucky enough to see the Kestrel hovering over the steps which led back to the carpark.

After thanking Joan Hales for her very valuable assistance, we headed back toward Inverloch, to a picnic spot overlooking the entrance to Anderson's Inlet, where we had morning tea. We then drove to the start of Screw Creek Nature Walk which is located at the eastern end of the municipal camping ground.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS (CONT)

### Autumn Weekend at Inverloch – 24-25 May 2008 (cont)

Joan Broadberry knew the area and directed us to where she had previously seen Coastal Greenhood orchids (*Pterostylis alveata*), and there they were very close to the start of the walk. Birds were scarce along the walk, the most numerous being Superb Fairy Wrens and New Holland Honeyeaters. Among various types of plants noted were Coastal Speargrass, Glassworts, the introduced *Spartina* in the creek under the bridge, Coast tea tree, *Allocasuarina littoralis* (which was in flower) and a number of lovely spreading *Eucalyptus pryoriana* trees located atop Townsend Bluff. The views across Anderson's Inlet to the east, south and west were beautiful. To the west we could see the entrance to the Inlet and beyond that to Eagle's Nest.

By 1pm with the walk completed we assembled on the beach for lunch. While we were there numerous seabirds used Anderson's Inlet as a flight path and Ibis, Herons, Pacific Gulls and an Egret were seen.

After lunch most of the group headed for home, but six of us travelled to Bald Hills Nature Reserve, 19km to the southeast. Along the gravel entry road we saw four Wedge-tailed Eagles sitting on dead branches of trees situated on top of an old sand dune. We met up with Cecily in the Reserve and, although there were few birds, there was quite an array of fungi and two orchids – the Little Helmet Orchid and the Wasp Orchid. About 4pm we called it a day and drove back to Inverloch.

A big thank you to Hazel and Alan for selecting the weekend, as both the weather and location were perfect.



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS (CONT)

### Breakfast with the Birds Field Trip to Badger Weir 14<sup>th</sup> June 2008

by Leaders – Peter and Alison Rogers

At 7.00am on a cool and crisp morning, 12 hardy members gathered at the Badger Weir picnic area for a BBQ breakfast. There was not a great dawn chorus, but still some birds including white browed scrub wrens and two cheeky lyrebirds scratching in the nearby shrubs helped us greet the morning. Three additional club members turned up after the breakfast routine to join in the early morning ramble to the weir and back.

We kept ourselves occupied during the walk by listening to the birds, checking out the ferns still misty with morning dew and trying to identify the many fungi. Some of the fungi highlights were the colonies of *Mycena interrupta* with their little blue caps and *Lycoperdon scabrum*, with the balls in various stages of development. Lyrebirds were again quite active, calling all around us but elusive to the eye. Our arrival back at the car-park found a female lyrebird working the surrounding gardens, with crimson rosellas chattering in the trees overhead.

Although a very cool morning, a great time was had by all who attended. Truly a favourite place for the RFNC with so many aspects of nature to be seen in such a small area.

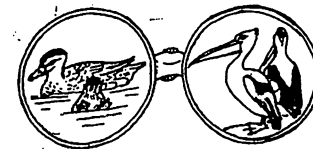
### Field Trip to River Gum Creek Wetlands, Hampton Park 13<sup>th</sup> July 2008

by Leaders – Graeme and Helen Fernandes

Although it was a sunny day with relatively clear skies, nineteen members braved the cold wind to assemble in the Kilberry Valley Primary School car-park. After a bite to eat and a cuppa members set off for a fairly long, but flat walk around the wetland ponds.

The wetlands are man-made, created by the City of Casey and Melbourne Water in 1995. The park was formerly known as the Hampton Park East Drainage Reserve. With a few old river red-gums along the old creek bed, it made the reserve quite appealing.

Some 38 species of birds were observed on the day. Some of the more interesting species were Australasian Shoveler, Australian Pelican, Black Swan, Hoary-headed Grebe and Australasian Grebe.



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS (CONT)

### Field Trip to Kwarra Gardens 16<sup>th</sup> August 2008

Leader – Jean Galliot

Twenty-two members attended the field trip to Kwarra Gardens, Kalorama. Several left home in sunny conditions, only to discover that a large cloud had settled on the mountain and when they arrived it was raining and cold. Fortunately, the rain stopped as everyone assembled at the gatehouse to be welcomed by Jean Galliot, an active “Friend of Kwarra Garden” and one of our own members, who was to lead us on an afternoon tour of the garden. Well rugged up, we gathered in the visitor centre where Jean introduced us to the Gardens and their history. Great pleasure was obtained viewing the many flowering plants, shrubs and trees as we were guided along the winding paths that divide the garden beds. Jean has played a leading role in relabelling plants in many of the garden beds and producing new name-keys for display alongside each bed. The magnitude of this task, still continuing, cannot be over-stated. After seeing most of the planted areas we also wandered along the path through the indigenous forest where a number of *Pterostylis* species were in flower.

After about two hours exploring most of the flora growing in the garden, we retreated indoors to a warm room where we were entertained to afternoon tea, including Jean’s homemade cookies. All present gave an enthusiastic vote of thanks to Jean for a very interesting and informative visit. As the rain began to fall again, many of us went to look at the new plant nursery layout and take the opportunity to buy tubes and pots of plants that had delighted us earlier, in the fond hope that they would bloom as well in our own backyards.

Alan and Hazel Veevers

## NATURE NOTES

### Coastal Invertebrates seen at Eagle’s Nest 25-5-08

Roger Needham

*Actinia tenebrosa* – deep red anemone  
*Bittium granaria* (*Cacozeliana granaria*) – mollusc  
*Cantharidis pulcherrimus* – trochid  
*Cominella lineolata* – checkboard shells  
*Elizia cugensis* – tiny green sea slug  
*Euchelus aspersus* – trochid  
*Galeolaria caespitosa* – tube worms  
*Ischnochiton australis* – chiton  
*Ischnochiton elongatus* – chiton  
*Ischnochiton versicolor* – chiton  
*Lepsiella vinosa* – gastropod

*Lipotrachea vestiens* – Sea cucumber  
*Meridiastra calcar* – sea star  
*Onchidella nigricans* – mollusc with a leathery body  
*Paragrapsus quadridentatus* – crab  
*Phasianella australis* – Turban shell (Painted Lady)  
*Scutus antipodes* – Elephant snail  
*Siphonaria* – similar to limpets  
*Spurilla macleayi* – orange sea slug  
*Xenostrobus pulex* – small mussel

## MEMBERS’ CONTRIBUTIONS

### October Field Trip to the Grampians

by Loris Peggie

On my way to the Grampians, I called at two favourite spots to search for orchids. In the bush on the same side as the ‘Corella Court’ sign (between Pomonal and Hall’s Gap) I was lucky to find a lot of orchids including *Petalochilus carneus*, *Glossodia major*, *Calochilus robertsonii*, *Arachnorchis tentaculata*, *Diuris pardina* and *Thelymitra antennifera*, all in flower.

At the other stop in the end of Haig’s Court, nearer to Hall’s Gap, I found most of the orchids seen at the first stop, plus *Diuris corymbosa* (great patches of them), *Thelymitra rubra*, *Microtis unifolia* and a nice patch of *Caleana major*.

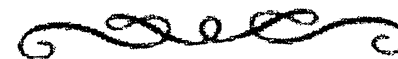
At the end of the field trip, I headed on to Dunkeld, stopping a couple of times in areas more recently burnt, but so recent there were no orchids and very few flowers to see.

I continued to Lake Bolac and turned into the Woorndoo Road. There is a substantial grassland area along the side of this road and much of it is marked ‘Roadside of Significance’. I noticed about five different yellow flowers in the grasses and when I stopped I discovered the majority of the flowers were *Diuris behrii* (Golden Cowslips) – just great clumps of them and hundreds along quite a distance of the grassland. I did manage some images, but this area is extremely windy.

My next stop was the grassland on the Streatham-Mortlake Road near where the Woorndoo Road intersects. Also a ‘Roadside of Significance’, I found *Diuris chryseopsis* (Golden Moths) and a lot of sun orchids in bud. All plants were very small and the sun orchids will be a week or more before they are out.

I then visited the conservation site on the Basalt Plains (Pleurisy Plains as they are known). I had to really part the grass and look to find just a few of the small Basalt Plains *Diuris gregoria*. The site does not look good for the basalt greenhood (*Oligochaetochilus basalticus*). As it was so dry there were very few buds and most of the rosettes have already dried up. I did find a small colony of *Hymenochilus* ssp af. *Muticus*, but they were so small and in such a very difficult position to photograph with the wind blowing a gale, I was not successful in obtaining sharp images of either orchid.

Many thanks to Alison and Peter for organizing the trip and to everyone for their company and sharing of knowledge on the birds, plants and animals we sighted.




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\*Loris has kindly provided this additional report from the Club’s weekend at the Grampians 13-14 October 2007, giving details of her orchid finds before and after the event, as well as the list of species seen during the weekend on p.10, so that interested members will know where to look for them at a future time. Thanks Loris. Ed.



## MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS (CONT)

### Orchid List - Club Field Trip to the Grampians October 2007 by Loris Peggie [names are according to D Jones' book – A Complete Guide to the Native Orchids of Australia]

Lake Wartook: *Petalochilus carneus* and *Glossodia major*, both in flower

McKenzie Falls: *Petalochilus carneus*, *Glossodia major*, *Simpliglottis valida* (Grampians), all in flower

Roses Gap Road: *Petalochilus carneus*, *Stegostyla cucullata*, *Glossodia major*, *Diuris pardina* and *Arachnorchis tentaculata*, all in flower.

Mt Zero-Halls Gap gravel road: *Pterostylis nutans*, *Bunochilus melagrammus* and *Linguella nana* all in seed. *Petalochilus carneus*, *Arachnorchis tentaculata* both in flower and lots of them.

Second stop Mt Zero-Halls Gap Road: *Petalochilus carneus*, *Stegostyla cucullata*, *Diuris pardina*, *Diuris corymbosa*, *Thelymitra antennifera*, *Thelymitra ixioides*, and the find of the weekend – *Arachnorchis reticulata* (to be checked) all in flower.

Heatherlie Quarry: *Bunochilus melagrammus*, *Pterostylis nutans*, *Stegostyla cucullata*, *Petalochilus carneus*, *Arachnorchis tentaculata* and *Acianthus caudatus* all in flower. *Acianthus pusillus* and *Corybas* sp. in seed.

Bush area near Lake Bellfield Wall (behind Lakeside Caravan Park): *Simpliglottis valida* (Grampians), *Pterostylis alpina* and *nutans* in flower, *Linguella nana* and *Bunochilus melagrammus* in seed. *Calochilus robertsonii*, *Arachnorchis tentaculata*, *Petalochilus carneus* and *Glossodia major* all in flower with some albino forms of *Glossodia major* and *Petalochilus carneus*.



*Caleana major* (Flying Duck Orchid)  
From photograph by Charles Compton

Members' Contributions cont p.12

## Field Care Days

### Field Care Day - Pound Bend – 28 July 2008

Leader - Cecily Falkingham

Early risers were greeted with the sound of rain on Sunday morning and members gathered in the car-park at Pound Bend well prepared for wintry conditions.

Ranger Kylie arrived well equipped with gloves, tools and large black plastic bags and she and Leader Cecily identified the task ahead. Kylie explained that the river frontage was the responsibility of Melbourne Water and that a recently acquired adjoining property had been sprayed, while the introduced rust had been used on the ridge, so that our work in the area was part of a bigger picture and would complement the overall care and maintenance of the park. We spread out around the car-park and found plenty of *Smilax* plants to keep us busy for the next hour. The overcast skies began to rain and we paused for morning tea, crowded together under the small information shelter. Here, Kylie turned on hot drinks and biscuits, which were very welcome. After the short break we chose to ignore the steady drizzle and managed to get some more work done. At 12:00 noon we called it a day, having filled about eleven of the big bags – an outstanding achievement.

Many thanks to the dedicated members who turned out and worked so hard. Cecily, Judith, Alan, Hazel, Roger, Inta, Peter, Alison and Maryanne. Thanks also to Mal and Gavin, two friends of Cecily's who were persuaded to join us. The area looked noticeably improved and now there are fewer plants to spread into the surrounding bushland. This is valuable work and those who attended can feel proud of their efforts. Well done everyone.



Members working at Pound Bend and Hochkins Ridge  
Photographs by Judith Cooke

### Field Care Day - Hochkins Ridge - 15 August 2008

Leader - Judith Cooke

Seven members met Helen Moss at the Manuela Street entrance: Judith, Cecily, Alan, Hazel, Ruth, Roger and Inta. We returned to the place where last year we had pulled out a thicket of *Polygala* plants nearly two meters tall. We removed a vast number of regenerating seedlings in that area. We also removed a substantial clump of *Smilax* infesting a large *Exocarpus* and dealt with a few other weeds, including *Sollya*, *Pittosporum*, *Blackberry* and *Acacia longifolia*. After an hour the area was looking much better and the numerous *Pterostylis* orchids were now more visible. Fortunately, the rain held off until we had nearly finished. Once more, thank you to all those who participated. We have had more volunteers this year than perhaps in any previous year and that is very encouraging.

## MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS (CONT)

### Leech Repellent

Ray Wall came across an article by Stephen Bunton in 'Wild Autumn 2007' proposing an alternative method for dealing with leeches, which may be of interest to members.

It states "Too often I hear of people reaching for salt or matches to remove a leech. I've never bothered, I just flick or rip them off when I see them. However, once when I was overwhelmed by their numbers I had to consider more serious measures. This was on a trip to Nepal when we ventured into a particularly overgrown and leech-ridden area. Our *sirda* instructed us to rub some chewing tobacco around our ankles in the morning. It worked brilliantly! Unfortunately chewing tobacco is not sold in Australia. But you can make up a similar concoction using cheap port and tobacco. Anything that makes a nice, juicy smear on your legs will do and it should last all day."

If any member is prepared to try this method, the Newsletter would be pleased to report the results!



### Dates for your Diary

17-19 October - SEANA Spring Weekend Healesville

Ringwood Field Naturalists Club Inc. No. A 9601

Website [home.vicnet.net.au/~rfnfc](http://home.vicnet.net.au/~rfnfc)

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