



NEWSLETTER: SEPTEMBER 2016

OT Dam – Birds & Fungi 4th July

OT Dam, part of the Arthurs Seat State Park, has never been a happy hunting ground for birding for us (one time our total bird count was two Black Ducks, which immediately flew away), but we decided to give it another go after several years.

The vegetation is largely eucalypt woodland, with the usual *E. radiata*, *E. ovata* and *E. obliqua*. It often seems to me that where the trees are dominated by *E. obliqua* (Messmate) there are very few birds. This seemed to be true here as it is at Woods Reserve at Teurong.

Although bird numbers were considerably higher than we had recorded before, they were still pretty low – low enough that we got distracted with the abundant fungi. For what it's worth, our bird list is given here.

Bird List for OT Dam 4 th July 2016	
Wedge-tailed Eagle	Eastern Yellow Robin
White-throated Treecreeper	Golden Whistler
Brown Thornbill	Grey Shrike-thrush
Little Wattlebird	Grey Butcherbird
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Mistletoebird
White-eared Honeyeater	Silveryeye
New Holland Honeyeater	

By far the highlight of the day was an extended close encounter with a White-throated Treecreeper, which persisted in exploring low on the trunks of trees within metres of us – the closest views I personally have ever had. The best previous encounter with the species involved the bird alighting within camera range and then flying off to the top of the tallest nearby tree as soon as it saw a camera. This one posed like a supermodel – in the end we were the ones to decide to move on.

The fungi included many mycorrhizal species – fungi that form a symbiotic relationship with plants, attaching to plant roots and helping with nutrient uptake while obtaining sugars from the plant. Of course the fungi we see are only the fruiting bodies; the main mass of the fungus consists of microscopic hyphae in the ground. Those that could be identified with some confidence included the following.

Cortinarius austrovenetus – a striking olive-green cap with mustard yellow gills, this fungus is mycorrhizal on Eucalypts.



White-throated Tree-creeper. Photo: Lee Denis

Cortinarius archeri – with an equally striking purple cap, also mycorrhizal on Eucalypts. Old specimens are brown.
Amanita xanthocephala – red cap with yellow flecks, which are the remains of the veil – also mycorrhizal on Eucalypts.

Amanita ochrophylla – a white cap over a thick stem with a bulbous base – also mycorrhizal.

Discinella terrestris – an ascomycete consisting of small yellow discs flat on the ground.

Lichenomphalia chromacea – a small yellow fungus associated with an algae, therefore “lichenised”.

Pseudohydnum gelatinosum – (Toothed Jelly) – found on a rotting tree stump, this fungus has tiny white teeth rather than gills or pores on its underside; upper surface dark grey.

Some others not so confidently identified included *Ramaria* sp – a coral fungus, also mycorrhizal
Amanita ochrophyloides? – very similar to *A. ochrophylla*, but with large bumps on top.

Observations for the day were rounded out by a patch of Nodding Greenhoods (*Pterostylis nutans*). - **Lee Denis**



Cortinarius archeri



Amanita xanthocephala



Pseudohydnum gelatinosum

Photos: Lee Denis

Frankston Nature Conservation Reserve

For our working bee this year we again joined the Friends at the FNCR, which we used to know as the Frankston Reservoir. A lot has been achieved since we joined the working bee last year. The Reserve is now open to the public (from Thursday to Sunday), with rangers on duty, and a couple of walking tracks are now open – a circuit track right around the reservoir (3.5km) and a Heathland Trail (1.5km).



Photo: Lee Denis

The circuit track passes through a heavily altered vegetation community, but with still a good number of indigenous species. Walking in a clockwise direction (i.e. heading to the left away from the dam wall) the upper story is dominated by pines, festooned with Wonga Vine (*Pandorea pandorana*) – is it indigenous to the area? Opinions differ. Further along there is an extensive grove of Cedar Wattle (*Acacia elata*) – although there is little understory, this grove does have some appeal. There are quite a few non-indigenous species of Acacia – Golden Wattle *Acacia pycnantha* is prominent – as well as a number of Grevilleas.

There are, however, a great number of indigenous species – a walk in late September saw the following in flower (by no means a comprehensive list):

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Goodenia ovata</i> | Hop goodenia |
| <i>Goodenia geniculata</i> | Bent Goodenia |
| <i>Burchardia umbellata</i> | Milkmaids |
| <i>Comesperma volubile</i> | Love Creeper |
| <i>Acacia paradoxa</i> | Hedge Wattle |
| <i>Hibbertia sericea</i> | Silky Guinea Flower |
| <i>Pimelia humilis</i> | Common rice-flower |
| <i>Billardiera scandens</i> | Common Apple-berry |
| <i>Bossiaea prostrata</i> | Creeping Bossiaea |
| <i>Epacris impressa</i> | Common heath |
| <i>Chaemiscilla corymbosa</i> | Blue Squill |
| <i>Wurmbea dioecia</i> | Early Nancy |
| <i>Dillwynia cinerascens</i> | Grey Parrot Pea |



Dillwynia cinerascens – Photo: Lee Denis

Also noted were *Clematis microphylla* (Small-leaved Clematis) and *C. aristata* (Old Mans Beard), *Xanthorrhoea minor* (Small Grass-tree), *Bursaria spinosa* (Sweet Bursaria) and *Exocarpos cupressiformis* (Cherry Ballart), along with *Gahnia* and *Lepidosperma* species. Eucalypts in this section include *E. radiata*, *E. viminalis* and *E. ovata*.

The Heathland is dominated by *Leptospermum continentale* (Prickly Tea-tree) with a scattering of Eucalypts (*E ovata* and *E. radiata*) and Black She-oak (*Allocasuarina littoralis*). Plants in flower included Common Beard-heath (*Leucopogon virgatus*), Prickly Moses (*Acacia verticillata*), and, on the edges, Slender Stackhousia (*Stackhousia viminea*), Common Flat-pea (*Platylobium obtusangulum*) and a number of species of sundews (*Drosera peltata*, *D. whittakeri*, *D glanduligera*). Some orchids can be found, including Nodding and Tall Greenhoods (*Pterostylis nutans* and *P. melagramma*).

The reservoir itself tends to have very few birds – usually Little Black, Little Pied and Great Cormorants, and Silver Gulls, but at different times Blue-billed, Musk and Freckled Ducks have been seen, and also Hoary-headed Grebe. Bush birds include common backyard birds (Magpie, Magpie-Lark, Grey Butcherbird, Eastern Rosella) but also less common birds in built-up areas like Crimson Rosella, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Bassian Thrush, White-browed Scrubwren. The pine trees are attractive to the Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoos. In visits over winter and spring a total of 40 bird species was recorded.



Great & Little Black Cormorants – Photo: Lee Denis

The Friends Group is working to remove some of the weed plants, particularly Bluebell Creeper (*Sollya heterophylla*), concentrating on the heathland area, and have done a lot of work in removing weeds and establishing the tracks. They hold a working bee on the second Sunday of each month – more information can be found at www.fnrc.org.au. – Lee Denis

Braeside Park 1st August

Despite some early rain which limited out numbers to four we had a reasonable day at Braeside. The rain soon eased, and at least there was no wind to speak of.

There were birds on the water at the hide but they took their time making an appearance. Swans, Cormorants, Hoary-headed Grebe and Black Ducks were about, and a band of Coots appeared after some time. A Swamp Harrier made a series of close passes over the hide, giving clear views and quite a few just-missed-it photos. Superb Fairy-wrens skittered around on the ground in front.

On the day, most of the usual birds were spotted, including Red-rumped Parrots and Red-browed Finches, which we usually see at this site. White-plumed and White-naped Honeyeaters, Brown Thornbills, a White-faced Heron. A total of 37 seemed reasonable considering the weather – although it had stopped raining the grass was wet enough to deter us from leaving the tracks.

After lunch a walk along the east side – after admiring the magnificent big River Red Gums on the flood plain – brought a sighting across the paddocks of a Whistling Kite – which we had seen earlier – which had grabbed one of the abundant rabbits, but seemed unable to do anything with its catch. As we watched it tried three or four times to carry its prey away but could not get airborne, eventually leaving it and flying off.



Whistling Kite at Braeside – Photo: Lee Denis

The rain starting to fall again, we ended the day there. – Lee Denis

Bird List For Braeside Park 1st August 2016				
Black Swan	Australian White Ibis	Galah	Red Wattlebird	Red-browed Finch
Australian Wood Duck	Yellow-billed Spoonbill	Little Corella	Noisy Miner	Welcome Swallow
Pacific Black Duck	Whistling Kite	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	White-plumed Honeyeater	Common Blackbird
Chestnut Teal	Swamp Harrier	Rainbow Lorikeet	White-naped Honeyeater	Common Starling
Hoary-headed Grebe	Purple Swamphen	Eastern Rosella	Magpie-Lark	Common Myna
Little Pied Cormorant	Eurasian Coot	Red-rumped Parrot	Grey Butcherbird	
Australian Pelican	Silver Gull	Superb Fairy-wren	Australian Magpie	
White-faced Heron	Spotted Turtle-Dove	Brown Thornbill	Little Raven	

Tongariro Alpine Crossing Judy Smart 10th August

Judy started with a disclaimer that she is geologically illiterate and the talk is about a geologically interesting area, so to be prepared for geological ignorance.



Mt Ngauruhoe – Photo: Judy Smart

Tongariro NP is in the middle of the North Island, and part of the Taupo volcanic zone which goes from White Island through Mt Tarawera, Rotorua, Lake Taupo & Tongarariro, all of which are currently or recently active.

The volcanic activity is along the boundary of the Indo-Australian plate and the Pacific plate – subduction of the Pacific Plate under the Indo-Australian. Taupo Lake is 45km long, takes half an hour to drive the length of, formed by a caldera which last erupted 1800 years ago in AD 186 – the world’s most violent in 5000 years – ash turned the sky red as far away as Rome and China. For comparison with more recent volcanic eruptions:

- Mt St Helens in 1980 - 3 cubic kilometres of earth thrown
- Krakatoa Indonesia –1883 - 8 km³
- Taupo – 110 km³ (36 times Mt St Helens)

Mt Tongariro is actually a group of 12 volcanoes, including

Mt Ngauruhoe, which is a side vent of Tongariro. It is a perfect cone, and is also known as Mt Doom from the Lord of the Rings films. The other peak is Mt Ruapehu, North Island’s tallest mountain (2797m), with snow on year round. The area surrounding has a number of mounds, debris avalanches from Ruapehu 1000s of years ago.

Plants in foreground of Tongariro are Scottish heather, which was introduced by early settlers and dominates the vegetation, and toe toe grass, which looks like a weed – South American Pampas grass – but isn’t. It is closely related to *Cortaderia* but is *Austroderia*.

The walk is 19.8 k, the most popular walk in NZ (like Sealers Cove in Victoria) – the day we walked so did 1200 others approx, probably 2000 the day before. Buses drop you off at 1100m, you climb on boardwalks to 1900m then descend to 700m to bus pick up. The Walk goes along the saddle between Ngauruhoe and Tongariro.



Blue Lake – Photo: Judy Smart

After an hour or so you get good views of Ngauruhoe – a strata volcano – the youngest and still active – first eruption 2500 ya, most recent in 1975 – it is a side vent of Tongariro. People climb it but it is not part of official track

and officially discouraged – there are no tracks, just scree, and you scabble your own way up and down – lots of people need rescuing. NZ doesn't encourage suing for civil negligence like in Australia, so you can't sue the NZ government for not preventing you from climbing Ngauruhoe.

The walk crosses South crater, you could climb Tongariro, but its an extra 1½ hours. The last major event there was 2012, when the northern craters rumbled, closing the track for 9 months.

Red Crater is the highest point at 1900m, formed 3000 ya, last eruption 1850. The red colour was created by extreme heat sintering and oxidising iron content of rock. Dyke is lava flow which flowed back into the crater, leaving a tube. From there the track descends on scree to the Emerald Lakes and Blue Lake.

For most of the walk there is little vegetation , just tussock grass and mosses and lichens, but after blue lake there is some alpine vegetation – very reminiscent of Australian alpine vegetation. According to NZ government website, origins of NZ alpine veg is a mystery, but it seems likely that some genera evolved from seeds blown over from Australian alps. Species seen included *Ranunculus insignis*, *Pentachondra pumilis*, a Richea type plant, *Euphrasia cuneata* – eyebright, and *Wahlenbergia* sp.



Euphrasia cuneata – Photo: Judy Smart

There was a recent crater, fenced off and signposted, probably from the 2012 eruption, and fumaroles with

steam.

On the descent they saw the first tree for the day, a Mountain toatoa – *Phyllocladus alpinus* – a podocarp. NZ has a large family of Podocarpaceae, including the famous Kauri (*Agathis*), Rimu (*Dacrydium*) and other conifers. The closest Australian is Tasmanian celery top pine *Phyllocladus asplenifolius*.

The rest of the descent was through rainforest with lahars – mud slides- from 2012 activity. Judy spoke briefly about the Gondwanan trees – we separated from NZ 60 – 130mill years ago, NZ's current tree flora has a similar composition to NSW's Tertiary fossil flora. For example, the Silver beech (which looks very much like silver birch) *Nothofagus menziesii* – there are many Nothofagus species in NZ, only 3 in Australia.

The day before the Tongariro walk they walked to Tama Lake, where some of the plants are similar to Australian species.

Leptospermum scoparium is common and indigenous to NZ as well as Australia – there is lots of it growing in Rotorua around geothermal areas, because it is shallow rooted it can cope with hot feet. Other close relatives are *Olearia* – NZ has many species, also *Celmisia* – snow daisy and Snow gentian – *Gentianella*.

The walk passes Taranaki Falls, which is an old lava flow and finishes at Tama Lake, an explosion crater. Along the way there were views of Mt Ruapehu, which couldn't be seen from the Crossing track, and the next day was completely clouded in. Its last volcanic activity was 2007, when a large rock crushed a walker's leg. On Christmas Eve, 1953 a crater lake lip collapsed – an enormous lahar swept down mountain taking everything in its path, including a railway bridge. Moments later a crowded train plunged into the river, killing 151 people. It was one of NZ's worst tragedies.

Maori history –Mt Tongariro is NZ's first national park – declared in 1887, after the Land Wars between the Maori and Colonial government, which the Maori lost. Local chief Horonuku presented the area to the Crown for the purpose of a NP,(only the 4th in the world), saying "If our mountains of Tongariro are included in the blocks passed through the court in the ordinary way what will become of them? They will be cut up and sold, a piece going to one pakeha and a piece to another." – **Judy Smart**

Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne 13th August

We all went to the RBG with different expectations, some of us just to see what had changed since last we were there, but Lee had a shopping list. He was hoping to see the resident Powerful Owl, a rainbow eucalypt (*Eucalyptus deglupta* – one of the few Eucalypts not native to Australia), and to identify a tree un-named at the George

Pentland Gardens, Frankston.

We started with the Australian Forest Walk along the Garden's border with Birdwood Avenue. There were a surprising number of Queensland Kauri (*Agathis robusta*) in there, with many other beautiful and interesting trees,

and also the tree that Lee was looking for – Native Tamarind (*Diploglottis australis*).



Burrawang – Photo: Velimir Dragic

Continuing the Gondwanan connection from my talk on NZ last week, we came next to the New Caledonia section, a fairly new collection, with particular emphasis on the thirteen New Caledonian species of *Araucaria*. Not far away was the NZ collection, with many *Coprosma* species, plus Rimu and Totara trees. We didn't find NZ Kauri (*Agathis australis*), but I'm sure they are there somewhere.

Velimir was particularly interested in the Gondwanan flora, such as the cycad *Lepidozamia peroffskyana*, (Burrawang), native to NSW and Queensland, of which there were many plants, and the great variety of palms.

We hadn't seen Guilfoyle's Volcano before. It is a renovation of William Guilfoyle's somewhat bizarre construction from 1876, a large water reservoir storage tank, landscaped to look like a volcano. The sides and surrounds are planted with brilliantly coloured succulents and cacti, especially the Golden Barrel Cactus *Echinocactus grusonii* from Mexico, plus other eccentric looking plants such as bottle trees.



Golden Barrel Cactus – Photo: Velimir Dragic

The water storage was planned by William Guilfoyle to irrigate the gardens, pumping water up from the lake and using gravity to distribute it. It fell into disrepair and was not used for over 100 years, but is now part of the irrigation system again. Storm water from surrounding streets is collected and run through wetlands on its way to the lakes. Water from the Ornamental Lake is pumped up to the Volcano, where water plants in the tank help to purify it, and prevent blue-green algae, before it is used on the gardens again.



Spiky Bottle Tree *Ceiba insignis* from South America – featured in Mayan legend. – Photo: Judy Smart

Near the Volcano is the California Garden, with a plaque commemorating Dame Elisabeth Murdoch's contribution to this project. The RBG has a focus on water wise gardening and preparing for climate change with the use of drought tolerant plants, and California shares a dry climate with us. Fact for the day: California (actually the whole of the western United States) has only one native palm tree, *Washingtonia filifera* (California Fan Palm), a large sturdy palm tree growing to around 20 metres.

The fern gully has been renovated, with new metal walkways, and beautiful under plantings of ferns. The trees and palms have recovered from the flying fox depredations and all look lush and healthy again. The Powerful Owl was supposed to be in there somewhere, but managed to avoid our attention.

We also searched in vain for the Rainbow Eucalypt. Along the way though, we saw many intriguing, curious and beautiful plants, along with a few birds. And we only walked around half the Garden's area. There was plenty left to see on our next visit. - **Judy Smart**

**Birding at The Briars
5th September 2016**

Six members gathered on a fine mild day at one of our regular birding spots. The magpie tending a nest above the boardwalk paid no attention to us, while the Spotted Pardalotes entering and leaving a burrow further on were more cautious.

The water level was high in the wetlands, where two species of Cormorant, Black Swans, a pair of Aussie Grebes, and Chestnut Teal were on the water, while Fairy Martins joined the Welcome Swallows tirelessly circling above it.

Bush birds were out, with most of the honeyeaters we might expect to see, as well as most of the other common bush birds. Fan-tailed Cuckoos seemed plentiful going by the calls, before we saw one; a Golden Whistler was spotted despite not making a sound, and notable sightings included Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoos, King Parrots and Scarlet Robin. A Black-shouldered Kite over the paddocks brought the final bird count to 55 – pretty similar to last year's count although with some very different birds.

boardwalk was of numerous patches of foam, about 100-150 mm long, with small dark dots, which several of our members identified as frog egg masses. A little research indicated that these particular type of egg raft are characteristic of Pobblebonks, or Eastern Banjo Frogs (*Limnodynastes dumerilii*), whose females reportedly can lay up to 4000 eggs in a season, which they lay in these foam rafts after rain. The most recent rain was almost a week prior to our visit. – **Lee Denis**



Fan-tailed Cuckoo – Photo: Lee Denis



Egg masses on ephemeral water



Close up view– Photos: Lee Denis

An intriguing sighting on shallow water beside the

Bird List For The Briars 5 September 2016				
Black Swan	Swamp Harrier	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Noisy Miner	Grey Fantail
Australian Wood Duck	Purple Swamphen	Rainbow Lorikeet	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	Willie Wagtail
Pacific Black Duck	Dusky Moorhen	Australian King-Parrot	White-eared Honeyeater	Grey Butcherbird
Chestnut Teal	Eurasian Coot	Eastern Rosella	White-plumed Honeyeater	Australian Magpie
Australasian Grebe	Masked Lapwing	Fan-tailed Cuckoo	White-naped Honeyeater	Grey Currawong
Little Pied Cormorant	Silver Gull	Laughing Kookaburra	New Holland Honeyeater	Little Raven

Little Black Cormorant	Spotted Turtle-Dove	Superb Fairy-wren	Scarlet Robin	Welcome Swallow
Australian Pelican	Common Bronzewing	Spotted Pardalote	Eastern Yellow Robin	Fairy Martin
Australian White Ibis	Crested Pigeon	White-browed Scrubwren	Golden Whistler	Common Blackbird
Straw-necked Ibis	Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo	Red Wattlebird	Grey Shrike-thrush	Common Starling
Black-shouldered Kite	Galah	Little Wattlebird	Magpie-Lark	Common Myna

Local Prehistoric Culture
Jamie Simpson, Gondwana Walkabout
14th September

Jamie Simpson runs education programs to introduce children and adults to traditional indigenous survival skills, such as techniques for making stone and wood tools, and the use of local plants for food, medicine and crafts. He is not indigenous, but through deep personal interest and research he has been accepted by the local indigenous community and is a non-executive director of the local land council.

He started by explaining that the name of the local people is misunderstood or mis-interpreted. It should be *Boonerong* for the place and people, and *Boonwarung* for the language – derived from Bunjil – the eagle – the local totem – *warung* meaning language, *Boonerong* for the people of Bunjil.

The Boonerong people here now are all descended from 5 women who were kidnapped in 1815 by sealers and taken to Flinders Island. The Boonerong people who remained were displaced by white settlement in the early 1800s and died from disease, murder, tribal war and lack of habitat to sustain life.

Most of the tools he showed us were modern, made to demonstrate traditional techniques, for instance, a traditional style axe, with a wooden handle and a sharpened stone for the head, tied on with natural fibres. These axes were used for stripping bark from trees to make shelter.

There was a club, made from a *Melaleuca ericifolia* root and stem, with minimal effort. Clapping sticks, for making music, were carved from Hazel pomaderris stems. Fire sticks, for creating fire, were made from a *Xanthorrhoea* base and Austral mulberry sticks. He had carved a sporting shield from Cherry ballart, which was quite heavy. There were old artefacts too – a greenstone axe head from Mt William, near Romsey, and an old club.

He challenged us to name a plant and he would supply a use. For example – Moonah – fresh leaf tips chewed for a headache; prostrate Goodenia – a tobacco substitute, chewed or smoked; *Clematis microphylla* – has the largest edible tuber; orchids and lilies – the tubers were eaten raw; Running Postman – the green beans were eaten; Bushman’s bread – a large spongy bracket fungus, tastes like white bread, and when dried could also be used for transporting embers to the next camping place to start fire.

He also explained the components of smoking ceremonies done at public events. There are 3 green plants used – *Acacia mearnsii* – representing edibility and function, Manna gum, representing community, and Cherry Ballart, representing family and relationships.

He also said that there are 743 species of Eucalypts, and 743 Aboriginal languages. – **Judy Smart**

Angair Wildflower Show 2016
17-18 September

We have been talking about going to the Angair (Anglesea and Aireys Inlet) Wildflower Show for years, and not having a SEANA camp this Spring, we finally got motivated and five of us went for the weekend.

It was even better than we had expected. The weekend is brilliantly organised by Angair, with a hall full of wildflower and orchid displays, reptiles to play with, and guided walks to the heath lands and forests around Anglesea. Angair have been hugely successful in their 45 years with campaigning to save bushland from development, maintenance of bushland, many publications and community education. A visit to their website (angair.org.au) is recommended.

Our tour leaders worried that the cool wet weather had made the flowers late, but there were more than enough to impress us. The Anglesea heath lands are of national significance, the richest and most diverse vegetation community in Victoria, with a quarter of Victoria’s plants. Highlights for me were:

- The Ellimatta Rd heath land, with multitudes of pea flowers, wattles, grass trees, beard heath, Hibbertias and Correa, along with great views of the coast and cliffs.
- The Forest Rd orchid tour with Margaret MacDonald, (author of many of their publications), seeing 15

orchids in a few hours.

- Fraser Ave, part of the Alcoa land, with 11 orchids along a short track, along with blue squill and many other flowers.
- A small heath land reserve near town – Angair members had erected temporary signs with plant names and notes, which were of great interest.

On our way home we dropped in to see Coralie's brother Greg at his lake side property at Jan Juc, and added three frogs to our list for the weekend! – **Judy Smart**



Caladenia oenochila – Red lip spider orchid – Photo: Judy Smart

During one of the guided wildflower walks, a local lady mentioned that the rare Rufous Bristlebird could be seen in the carpark at nearby Point Addis. Coralie, Pat and I were hoping to see this secretive bird which lives in coastal heathland. It is mid-brown with a rufous crown, the breast and throat are pale grey with a scaly pattern; it's about the size of a female blackbird. When disturbed, it runs swiftly with its longish tail cocked.

We scoured the moonah woodland and the scruffy under-

storey of coastal pomaderris, lomandra etc. Coralie had a glimpse of a brown bird zooming into the thicket, then we heard an unusual penetrating repetitive call. Further searching produced NOTHING. We think it was probably the elusive Bristlebird, but we can't be sure.

Pat and I walked to a lookout with a grand view of the coast towards Bell's Beach and Torquay, including large slump-zones in the sandstone cliffs. I glanced down at the low mounded vegetation on the exposed clifftop and noticed 2 black dots, then realized these were eyes, all that was obvious of a well-camouflaged Blue-winged Parrot, only 3m away. A pair were feeding on a bush and we watched them for about 8 minutes; absolutely entralling. I have seen them before but it's usually only a fleeting glimpse as they fly by, low and fast. As lovely and interesting as the local orchids and wildflowers were, the wonderful view of these colourful little parrots was the highlight of the weekend for me. – **Heather Ducat.**



Blue-winged Parrot – Photo: Heather Ducat

Peninsula Field Naturalists Club Inc

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month with a field trip the following Saturday. Further information and current Programme of Activities can be found at our website.

President:
Ms Coralie Davies

All correspondence to
Secretary
Mrs Judy Smart

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Newsletter edited by Lee Denis

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