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CANNBERRA ACT 2601

FIELD NATURALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF CANNBERRA INC.

FIELD NATURALIST

MEETING—THURSDAY 6 February 2014
7:30 pm Australian National University
Gould Seminar Room, Building 116, Daley Road, ANU, ACT
details back page

Uncovering the hidden secrets of cryptic and rare wildlife

Speaker: Andrew Claridge

Dr Andrew Claridge is a Senior Research Scientist with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, based in Queanbeyan. Over the past 20 years or so Andrew has worked on a wide diversity of native fauna in south-eastern mainland Australia, as well as in the Pacific Northwest United States. Many of these fauna are either cryptic or rare, making it a huge challenge to study and manage them. In his talk Andrew will reflect on the techniques used to uncover the hidden secrets of the wildlife he has had the privilege of working on, and reveal aspects of the biology of these otherwise poorly understood animals. Management challenges relating to the ongoing conservation of native fauna will also be discussed.



Spotted-tailed quoll

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Black Mountain wildflower ramble

Saturday 12 October 2013

This was this 42nd year we have honoured the Burbidge/Chippendale tradition of a social wildflower ramble to celebrate the spring flowering in our beautiful Black Mountain. The ramble was started for the National Parks Association by Nancy Burbidge (of ACT flora fame) and continued for some decades by George Chippendale (eucalypt specialist) until his legs gave up. I took over from George in 2004 to ensure the tradition continued – but don't expect to organise for another decade. NPA is still involved but U3A, ANPS (was SGAP), Botanic Gardens Friends and Field Nats have been added over the years. Friends of Black Mountain has joined for the last two walks and is an ideal group to continue the tradition.

Our aim has been to introduce people to our somewhat cryptic wildflowers with a social ramble walking on easy grades. We try to advertise widely to attract people who don't normally ramble in the bush as well as native plant enthusiasts. It's BYO morning tea to get people to talk to each other. The date has been established as the second Saturday in October (more or less peak flowering) and the time 'from 9.30 am sharp to 12 noon or later'. We advertise it as a 'ramble' so people know it is slow-paced. We use the Belconnen Way entrance as it's the only one combining easy grades with parking. We aim to take as many people who are interested and expect any number between 30 to 90 – email and phone bookings give us a reasonable idea. We've been organising four guides and helpers so we have the capacity to cope with crowds if needed. Linda Beveridge discovered that it should be a 'public event' and organised the paperwork for our 2013 ramble.

This was the first year the Chippendale walk was run without Laurie Adams – he'd been George's side kick for years. We missed you Laurie and your Black Mountain key and the way you explained it. Perhaps you will join us again for part of the walk. Fortunately, Michael Doherty joined us and I was delighted to have him on our team. Rosemary Purdie would have led a group if she'd been in Canberra. Spring is a difficult time to have enough guides so we need a few people who we can call on both as guides and helpers.

The 2013 ramble was held on Saturday 12 October from 9.30 am to 12–12.30 pm with four guides – Peter Ormay, Isobel Crawford, Michael Doherty and myself with helper Janelle Chalker. For the first time, we split the groups, with two (Peter and Isobel) in one direction and the other two (Michael and myself) along a new route. We made more of an effort to keep the groups separate and the people in the group together so everyone was involved. We planned to join the groups for morning tea, but this didn't happen.

The flowering season was one to two weeks earlier than usual so we saw the orange of *Daviesia mimosoides* from a distance rather than just finding the first flowers.



There were a couple more eggs and bacon pea species also in full flower and the mauve *Kunzea parvifolia*.

The most beautiful display was



the stands of graceful *Leptospermum multicaule* with its white teatree flowers and pink buds with scattered donkey orchids poking through and a few late yam daisies. The donkeys popped up in many places – probably two species of *Diuris*.



Plants that are usually incipient like *Phyllanthus hirtellus* and *Brachyloma daphnoides* were flowering well and challenged us to identify them. We found blue star flowers on clumps of *Stypandra glauca* as we changed aspect for our return.



A few shrubs of *Olearia microphylla* were in full flower. There were two species of the golden guinea *Hibbertia* species scattered through the walk - *H. obtusifolia* and *H. calycina* or *H. riparia*. And more gold with *Craspedia*.



There were only a few shiny purple *Glossodia major* orchids left but George's favourite plant (*Comesperma volubile*) was not flowering.



We saw a few white and pink caladenias, twining fringed lilies, the rare *Lyperanthus suaveolens*, a few bearded orchids and an echidna.



in time. Linda did a marvellous job with publicity in the Botanic Gardens and that was reflected in their increased numbers. The 54 people were made up of 21 from ANBG Friends, 10 from 'Word of Mouth', 6 from Black Mountain Friends (including 3 leaders), 4 from NPA, 3 each from ANPS, U3A, CBA, 2 from Field Nats and 1 from Parks & Cons. Someone gave Neighbourhood Watch, NPA and ANBG Friends as the information source. The popular postcodes this year were 2614, 2602, 2903 and 2612. I had someone from U3A on my group and she was a target person with a horticultural/bushwalking background who had never stopped to see the tiny wildflowers before.

I trust that Field Naturalist people will be able to help with the Burbidge/ Chippendale ramble and enjoy the spring flowering on many more second Saturdays in October.

Jean Geue

We attracted 54 people which was a good group - but less than the 70 or 73 (in 2010 and 2012) or the 90 that George had when he was giving U3A classes. I did forward advertising by June or earlier, but, unfortunately, ran out of steam towards the end. I got Canberra Times listings in both Tim the Yowie Man and Megan Doherty on the Saturday, but no one said they had read it

FNAC Outing to Black Ridge 13 October 2013

Photos: Rosemary von Behrens



Margaret Kalms and Buchan's Creek rocks



Oxylobium ellipticum

Caterpillar



Scribbles on *Euc. pauciflora*

Six Field Natters explored one small section of Black Ridge on a pleasant, warm day. We did not see a koala but examined several trees which indicated their presence by chew marks in the bark. Old chew marks become dark and the bark eventually peels. See below.

Wombat skull



FNAC Outing to Mount Aggie 10 October 2013

Photos: Kevin Squair & Rosemary von Behrens



The slopes of Mt Aggie overlooking the Goodradigbee Valley and the ridges of the Fiery Range. [KS]



insect induced gall [KS]



Leucochrysum albicans ssp alpinum [KS]



Cassinia aculeata in Lichen [RvB]

At Bulls Head a small mob of grazing Red-necked Wallabies either continued eating or skitted away on our approach. At least 10 of these gentle animals kept the grass low.

Three wise men gaining altitude. Kevin Squair, Chris Bunn, Dierk von Behrens. [RvB]



- Acacia melanoxyton*
- Asperula scoparia*
- Bossiaea foliosa*
- Cassinia aculeata*
- Crassula sieberiana*
- Craspedia variabilis* ?
- Dianella tasmanica*
- Eucalyptus pauciflora*
- Euphrasia collina*
- Grevillea lanigerum*

Species on Mt Aggie

- Glycine clandestine*
- Leucochrysum albicans ssp alpinum*
- Leucopogon fletcheri*
- Oxylobium ellipticum*
- Ranunculus lappaceus*
- Stegostyla alpina*
- Tetratheca* sp
- Viola* sp

A sea of yellow [KS]



A gnarled fire-ravaged tree. [RvB]



Madagascan fireweed alert



Fireweed plants have been located on the Monaro Highway, Kings Highway, Gundaroo Drive, Horse Park Drive, Crace, Forde, Franklin and Bruce in the past. These infestations have been brought under control.

More recently, new infestations have been found in recently laid couch turf. These infestations are being controlled at Forde opposite Mulligan's Flat, Franklin near the Mulanggari Grassland and the Crace suburb near Gungahlin Hill.

Fireweed is very toxic to horses and cattle causing irreversible liver damage, with horses being the most susceptible. Death can occur up to six months after initial poisoning.

Fireweed can also:

- reduce the total grazing capacity of a property;
- decrease pasture production;
- decrease livestock growth rates; and
- incur high control costs.
- The plant forms a persistent seed bank if not controlled before it flowers. It can also rapidly take over heavily grazed and neglected pastures and roadsides, competing strongly with existing plants. It seeds prolifically and grows to maturity quickly.

Fireweed reproduces almost exclusively by seed. Fireweed can alter its germination response, adapting its growing and flowering behaviours to suit changing environmental conditions.

Fireweed is a declared Pest Plant and a notifiable Pest Plant in the ACT under the Pest Plants and Animals Act 2005 (the Act). Due to these declarations, a number of offences apply to the introduction of

fireweed into the ACT.

It is an offence under the Act to intentionally or recklessly import a pest plant into the ACT, punishable with a maximum penalty of \$5,500. It is also an offence punishable by a maximum penalty of \$5,500 to intentionally or recklessly propagate a pest plant in the ACT.

It is an offence punishable by a maximum penalty of \$2,200 for the occupier of a premises, where a notifiable plant exists, to treat the matter recklessly and not inform the Director General in writing within 48 hours of the existence of the notifiable plant.

Offences and penalties also exist for recklessly using machinery that may spread a pest plant and recklessly disposing of a pest plant in the Act.

If you suspect you have Fireweed on your property please contact Steve Taylor on 6207 2278 or Tristan Adrian on 6207 1167 for further information on control measures.



Source: TAMS web site: http://www.tams.act.gov.au/parks-recreation/plants_and_animals/invasive_species/managing_invasive_weeds/information_on_invasive_plants/madagascan_fireweed_alert

Month	Speaker	Topic
6 February	Andrew Claridge	Uncovering the hidden secrets of cryptic and rare wildlife
6 March		
3 April		



Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra Inc.

Who are the Field Naturalists?

The Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra (FNAC) was formed in 1981. Our aim is to foster interest in natural history by means of meetings and regular field outings. Meetings are usually held on the first Thursday of each month. Outings range from weekend rambles to long weekends away. Activities are advertised in our monthly newsletter. We emphasise informality and the enjoyment of nature. New members are always welcome. If you wish to join FNAC, please fill in the member application below and send it in with your subscription to the FNAC Treasurer at the address below.

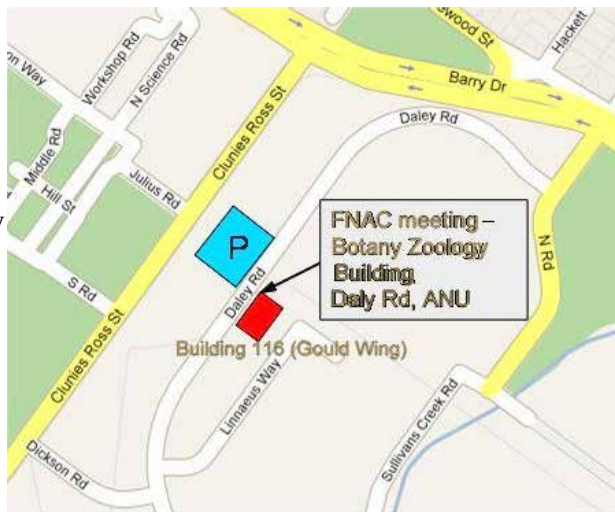
President: Rosemary von Behrens pH: 6254 1763

Email: fieldnaturalist@yahoo.com.au

Website: under construction

All newsletter contributions welcome.

Editor



Monthly meeting venue: Division of Botany and Zoology, Building 116, Daley Rd, Australian National University. Park (the Xmas meeting is at the adjacent building 44 and will start at the earlier time of 6:30 pm)

Field Naturalists' Association of Canberra
GPO Box 249
Canberra ACT 2601



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

Family name: First name:

If a family membership, please include the first names of other members of the family:

.....

Postal address:

Suburb: State: Postcode: Home phone:

Work phone: Email address:

Subscription enclosed: \$.....(Single/Family \$25) Donation: \$.....

How did you hear about FNAC? Please circle: FRIEND? OTHER? Please specify: