

HFNC Excursion to Koonongwootong Reservoir 21 May 2016

Dave Munro, Diane Luhrs & Rod Bird

Participants: John & Glenys Cayley, Hilary Turner, Lyn & Dave Munro, Rod Bird & Diane Luhrs, Peter Hocking, Janeen Samuel & Ken Grimes.

Background:

This reservoir is located in a valley NW from Coleraine (take the Edenhope-Coleraine Rd just west of Coleraine and then, after about 10 km, the Reservoir Rd). WannonWater produced a Master Plan for this reservoir in 2012, aiming to offer locals and visitors recreational opportunities as well as enhancing the biodiversity of the surrounds. The reservoir was built in 1925 to supply water to Coleraine and Casterton and still fills part of that function, acting as a backup supply to the Tullich Groundwater System. Work began in 2012 to upgrade the embankment and outlet area to improve the long-term stability of the structures. The reservoir is used for recreational fishing and non-powered boating. The site also has significant Aboriginal Cultural Heritage recognition. An indication of the plans for the area may be seen in the WannonWater Master Plan draft (2012) below.



The weather was cool and windy when we arrived at the main entry on Reservoir Rd. Part of the proposed works have been completed, including the engineering works associated with the reservoir embankment, entry road and carpark. Some pines have been removed from the entrance area and a shelter has been constructed. No toilets, picnic facilities, walking trails or restoration plantings have been made at this stage.

We inspected the area of the dam wall and then walked around the western side of the reservoir, passing through tall pines and Blackwood trees.

There were a few flowers of Pink Bindweed (*Convolvulus erubescens*), Bluebell (*Wahlenbergia* sp.), Grassland Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis perennans*) and Jersey Cudweed (*Helichrysum luteoalbum*), the latter along bare shoreline areas. There were some stands of Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*) with *Lomandra* & *Arthropodium* sp. Tall Spike-rush (*Eleocharis phacelata*) was the major water plant.



A short walk is proposed for the west side, with the major walk being along the eastern edge to connect with the Coleraine-Nareen Rd.

It was too early in the year to find many flowering plants but this was one of the most successful fungal excursions in recent years. The Coleraine area has received more rain recently than further south and east. The highlights were the mass fruiting of the *Pholiota* on the burned ground round the pine stumps and the glorious clumps of *Omphalina nidiformis* (Ghost Fungus) under the pines.

Fungi List

Species Name	Common Name	Substrate	Comments
<i>Agaricus xanthodermus</i>	Yellow Stainers	soil	Several groups found on southern grasslands.
<i>Amanita muscaria</i>	Fly Agaric	soil	Several in grassland.
<i>Laccaria</i> sp.	“deceivers”	soil	Reddish orange, concolourous. Several troops on grassy woodland on west side of reservoir.
<i>Lactarius deliciosus</i>	Pine Mushrooms	Pine litter	Scattered beneath <i>P. radiata</i> , west side of res.
<i>Lepiota</i> sp.		litter	A few small, delicate specimens seen. Pale tan cap with reddish “peak” (umbo).
<i>Lepista nuda?</i>	Wood Blewitt	Pine chips	Very flat specimen.
<i>Leucoagaricus naucinus</i>		Soil	One specimen seen at western end of spillway. White cap, gills and stem.
<i>Macrolepiota clelandii</i>	Slender Parasol	Soil	One specimen in grassland beneath <i>A. mearnsii</i> .
<i>Mycena</i> sp.		Soil	Several small grey individuals in grassland litter.
<i>Omphalina nidiformis</i>	Ghost Fungus	Bare roots	Around <i>P. radiata</i> . About 20 colonies.
<i>Pycnoporus coccinea</i>	Scarlet Bracket fungus	Branches	On dead branches of planted <i>Hakea nodosa</i> .
<i>Pholiota highlandensis</i>		Clay soil	Vast troops at a burn pile around <i>P. radiata</i> stumps
<i>Schizophyllum commune</i>	Split Gill	Wood	<i>P. radiata</i> stump. Very young colony
<i>Scleroderma</i> sp.	an earthball	Soil	Roadside on northern entrance to reservoir.
<i>Suillus breviceps</i>	Slippery Jack	Soil	Copious amongst <i>P. radiata</i> plantation.

Coprinus comatus (Lawyers Wigs) were seen in wood chip mulch outside public toilets in Coleraine.

Our birdlist was quite short. We saw 3 species of cormorants but there were no ducks present. The list:

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| 1. Great Cormorant (2) | 8. Masked Lapwing | 15. Brown Thornbill |
| 2. Little Pied Cormorant (2) | 9. Laughing Kookaburra | 16. Yellow-rumped Thornbill |
| 3. Little Black Cormorant (3) | 10. Little Raven | 17. Superb Fairy-wren |
| 4. Australian Pelican (1) | 11. Crimson Rosella | 18. Yellow-faced Honeyeater |
| 5. Hoary-headed Grebe | 12. Red-rumped Parrot | 19. Australian Magpie |
| 6. Eurasian Coot | 13. Grey Fantail | 20. Brown Falcon (1) |
| 7. Purple Swamphen | 14. Restless Flycatcher | 21. Willie Wagtail |

A dead fox was found in a burrow. There was also much evidence of tunnels and runways of Swamp Rats (*Rattus lutreolus*) in the grassland. There was no entry at the Coleraine-Nareen Rd site. We had lunch at the Peter Francis Points Reserve. White-naped and New Holland Honeyeaters were busy there.



Omphalotis nudiformis



Pholiota highlandensis



Macrolepiota clelandii



Suillus breviceps



Amanita muscaria



Suillus breviceps



Lepiota sp.



Schizophyllum commune



Lepista nuda?



Pholiota highlandensis



Dave with a *Lactarius deliciosus*



Laccaria sp.



A fungus on a fungus



Dead Red Fox from a burrow



Convolvulus erubescens & *Oxalis perennans*