

HFNC excursion to Buandik and Hollow Cave, 23 April 2017

Diane Luhrs, Rod Bird, Peter Hocking & Dave Munro

Participants John & Glenys Cayley, Dave & Lyn Munro, Jane Hayes, Janeen Samuel, Liz Fenton, Amanda Smith, John Del Pratt, Daryl Delahoy, Rod Bird & Diane Luhrs departed from the Hamilton Visitor Centre at 9 a.m. and travelled in convoy to the Buandik picnic area. There we met Peter Hocking.

Our objective for the day was to visit the Hollow Cave and Red Cave in the western slope of the Victoria Range, about 21.5 km SE from Buandik. The club had visited Hollow Cave on 24 June 1997 and again on 18 Aug 2001, on the latter occasion when looking (unsuccessfully) for the Square Hole. Rod and the Cayleys had walked across to Red Cave later in 2001, finding *Tasmannia lanceolata* inside. Dave had Bushwalking Victoria Walk Sheet 12 (2016) indicating a return walk of 6 hr and 6.5 km to Red Cave.

The day was a beautiful day for a walk in the bush – sunshine and no wind. After a morning cuppa at the camping ground, the group set off to the Hollow Cave. We knew that a track started about 20 m south from the intersection of the camp ground track and the Goat Track but it took a little while to locate it, since a bushfire some years earlier had created a mass regeneration of *Ixodia* and *Callitris rhomboidea*, with some *Gahnia radula* and other shrubs, and the path had not been cleared since then. We found further along that another party had put a few tapes on trees and cairns in prominent places to mark a trail. The walk required some rock hopping, with a few steep sections to negotiate. Participants did various stages of the excursion according to their health and fitness. Most of the party made it to the first small overhang where some faded Aboriginal paintings (mainly animal tracks) were seen.

Peter, John DP, Rod, Daryl, Liz, Amanda and Diane came within sight of the **Red Cave** and enjoyed lunch on a rocky prominence (gps 37-15-23/142-17-32) with a view south across the valley to Red Cave. They had a clear view of **Hollow Cave** about 150 m further north and decided to scramble their way to this deep cavern which has large openings on two sides below a thick band of hard sediment. All enjoyed the extensive views across the surrounding country. All also agreed that an attempt to reach Red Cave would be difficult, on account of the dense vegetation and lack of a clear path, and take at least 2 hours, despite being only 200 m or so distant as the crow flies. That quest was left for another day! We all returned to the picnic ground where we met up for afternoon tea to discuss our sightings for the day.

Birds:

Buff-rumped Thornbill	Laughing Kookaburra	Spotted Pardalote
Crescent Honeyeater	Superb Fairy-wren	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo
Grey Shrike-thrush	Rufous Whistler	White-throated Treecreeper
Grey Currawong	Eastern Yellow Robin	White-winged Choughs
Grey Fantail	Scarlet Robin	Crimson Rosella
Pied Currawong	Long-billed Corella	

Plants in flower:

<i>Eriochilus cucullatus</i> (Parson's Bands)	<i>Ixodia achillaeoides</i> (Ixodia)
<i>Correa reflexa</i> (Common Correa)	<i>Wahlenbergia</i> sp. (Blue-bell)
<i>Correa glabra</i> (Rock Correa)	<i>Acacia retinodes</i> (Wirilda)
<i>Astroloma humifusum</i> (Cranberry Heath)	<i>Olearia ramulosa</i> (Twiggy Daisy-bush)

Fungi:

<i>Heterotexus</i> sp. (Yellow Jelly Bells)	<i>Pycnoporus coccineus</i> (Scarlet Bracket Fungi)
<i>Russula</i> sp. (purple-capped gilled fungus)	<i>Lycoperdon</i> sp. (small white puffballs)

Butterflies: Common Brown Butterfly and Cabbage White Butterfly



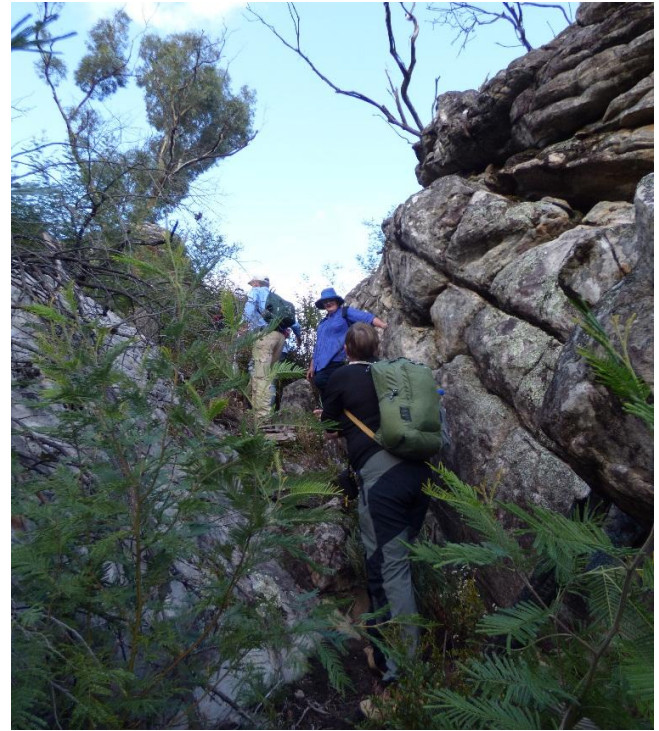
We pushed through thick and tall stands of Ixodia



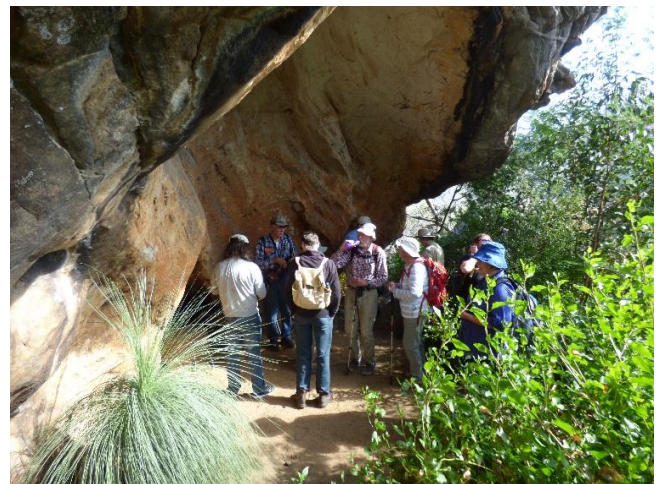
Blues and whites make a pretty picture



View NW to Glenisla Shelter area



Up we go – John, Liz and Amanda



First rock shelter, Aboriginal paintings and Hop Goodenia



Pycnoporus coccineus (Scarlet Bracket Fungus)



Emu track



On the way to the Hollow Cave



Wallaby track ?



Correa glabra



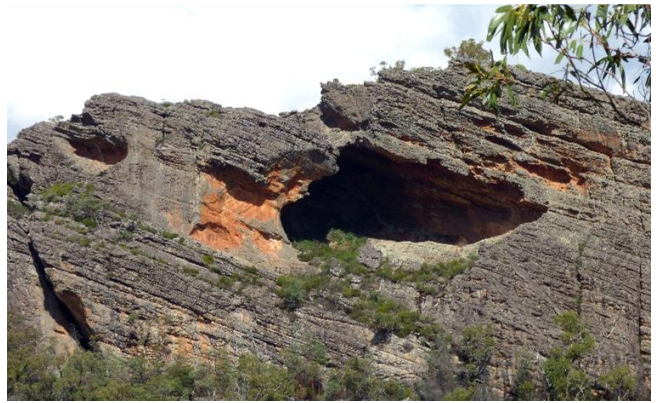
Xanthorrhoea australis and the rock art shelter



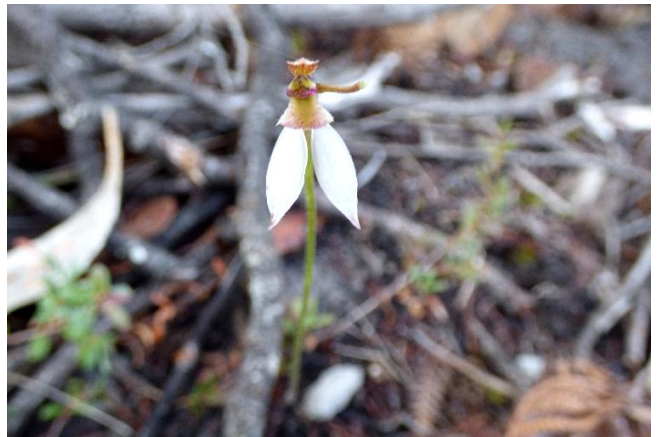
Correa reflexa



The path



Red Cave viewed from lunch spot



Parsons Bands orchid



Hollow Cave –like an eagle’s head – view from the lunch spot



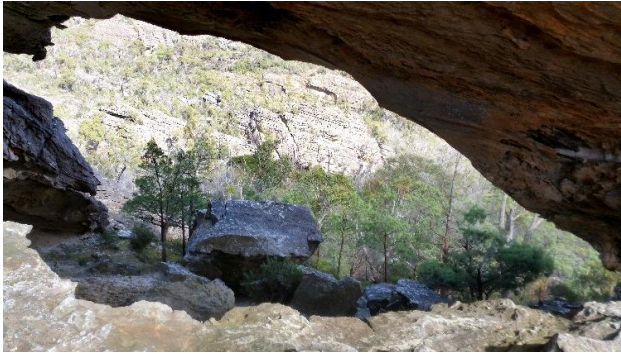
Huntsman Spiders hole with lid



Lunch stop on the cliff edge: Rod, Diane, John D-P, Liz. Red Cave in the background (PH)



Daryl, Rod, Diane, John D-P in Hollow Cave (PH)



Hollow Cave lower entry



John D-P & Darryl leading the way to Hollow Cave



View from inside Hollow Cave



Hollow Cave upper entrance



Map produced by Peter Hocking (the exact location of Red Cave on this map is uncertain!)

