

# HFNC Excursion to Yatmerone Swamp and the Dunkeld to Wurgarri carpark walk on 20 August 2022

Diane Luhrs, Wendy McDonald and Rod Bird

**Present:** Rod Bird, Diane Luhrs, Glenys Cayley, Ross Simpson, Reto Zollinger, Yvonne Ingeme, Peter Hocking, Peter and Wendy McDonald, Sarah Scott, Dave Munro, Ivor and Ruth Graney

**Leaders:** Dave Munro and Ross Simpson

The Hamilton Field Naturalists Club's initial plan for the day was to visit the Wild Man's Cave in the Black Range. However, recent rains and the slippery track reported by Peter and Wendy McDonald had us reconsider that excursion and instead choose something a bit safer and closer to home. Hence this excursion. Most of us departed from the Hamilton Visitor Centre at 9.30 am to drive to Yatmerone Swamp Wildlife Reserve in Peshurst. Here we met Ruth and Ivor Graney and Dave Munro.

## Yatmerone Swamp Wildlife Reserve

Dave gave a run-down of the history and importance of this wetlands site and of the growth of the native vegetation planted over ten years ago.

Dave also explained the importance of this site to his family and led us to the wonderful memorial seat his daughter-in-law had crafted in memory of Dave's wife, Lyn. This was a very special occasion and we all felt for Dave as we remembered how special Lyn was.

There were many swans on nests in the wetland. I also heard and then saw a Brown Thornbill in the Cypress trees and across the wetland, a fox was watching us. Wendy wrote up the bird list for this and the other sites visited during the day.

## Yatmerone Swamp Wildlife Reserve



Walking along the path to the bird-hide



The wetlands are full of water



Memorial seat made in honour of Lyn Munro





Dave sitting on Lyn's memorial seat



Pale, brown with white stem fungus



Foy-loxy was not too disturbed by us



*Scleroderma* sp.



Brown Thornbill sings its beautiful song



The Black Swans are nest-building



Rusty-coloured fungus



The bird-hide





*Omphalina* sp. ?

**Birds at Yatmerone Swamp Wildlife Reserve:**

<u>Common Name</u>
Australian White Ibis
Black Swan
Brown Thornbill
Crested Pigeon
Dusky Moorhen
Eurasian Coot
Grey Fantail
Grey Shrike-thrush
Masked Lapwing
New Holland Honeyeater
Pacific Black Duck
Raven (likely Forest)
Red Wattlebird
Superb Fairy-wren
Welcome Swallow
Whistling Kite
White-faced Heron

We drove off in convoy – with some stopping at the bakery for lunch – along the Penshurst-Dunkeld Rd to stop at one of the GHCMA experimental native plant regeneration sites to see the progress. What we saw was not as significant as we had hoped it would be – the recent rains had swamped any native grasses that may have germinated in the scalped areas.



Roadside stop to examine grassland re-vegetation plots



**The Dunkeld to Wurgarri (Mt Sturgeon) carpark walk**

We made our way to the Dunkeld gardens and set up our picnic lunch under the shelter there. After lunch, Rod, Reto and Ross did a car-shuffle to leave some vehicles at the Mt Sturgeon carpark so that we wouldn't have to return to Dunkeld along the same walking track. When the drivers returned, we all headed off following Ross's direction to find Adams St, walk west along that to its meeting with the track that led to the Mt Sturgeon carpark.

**Section 1 – from Dunkeld west along Salt Creek.**

This was a delightful walk, first along Salt Creek with sculptures lining the path. Trees planted along Salt Creek included River Red Gum (*E. camaldulensis*), Swamp Gum (*E. ovata*) Blackwood (*A. melanoxylon*), Bottlebrush (*Callistemon* species) and Golden Spray (*Viminara juncea*). Native species of sedges, rushes and grasses were present in the creek line. These species included Fen Sedge *Carex gaudichaudiana*, Tall Spike-rush (*Eleocharis sphacelata*), Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*), Cumbungi (*Typha domingensis*) and Common Tussock (*Poa labillardierei*).

A Black Wallaby with pouch young sat quietly as we passed. We passed through a gate to the walk on Myers farmland. Many Grey Kangaroos were resting in the paddocks to the south. We also passed two very large River Red Gums (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) – one had lost a very large branch recently.

We followed the path as it turned north and crossed over the Wannan River on two newly constructed bridges. We noticed a Yellow Flatworm moving quite purposefully along the edge of the path.

**Section 2 – open grassy woodland**



Section 2 was across a meadow with many large River Red Gum. Two emus were seen in this section. There were good views up to Mt Sturgeon. As we walked further north passed the signs to the Homestead Walk we entered a woodland where many/most of the rough-barked trees on the flanks of the mountain were Scent-barks (*E. aromaphloia*) and/or Manna Gum (*E. viminalis*).

**Section 3 – woodland/heathland**

The Stringybarks on the mountain slope appeared, from the shape and size of the capsules, to be mainly (or all) Messmate Stringybark (*E. obliqua*). Oyster Bay Pine (*Callitris rhomboidea*) appeared on the last 500 m of the walk and there were also some Silver Banksia (*Banksia marginata*), Prickly Tea-tree (*Leptospermum continentale*), Manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*), Dwarf Sheoak (*Allocasuarina* sp.), Common Fringe-myrtle (*Calytrix tetragona*), Scented Groundsel (*Senecio odoratus*) and Black Wattle (*A. mearnsii*) along the way.

We saw many patches of orchids in flower: Dwarf Greenhoods – *Pterostylis nana*, Trim Greenhoods – *P. concinna*, Tall Greenhoods – *P. longifolia*, Striped Greenhoods – *P. alata*; and Slaty Helmet Orchid – *Corybas incurvus*. We also came across patches of white, pink and crimson Common Heath (*Epacris impressa*). By the time we were near the car park we had spread out so much that those of us who had taken time photographing arrived at the carpark after others had been driven back to Dunkeld.

Overall, we really enjoyed the walk from Dunkeld to the Mt Sturgeon carpark with its variety of habitats. The big River Red Gums were impressive, and all the orchids coming up made this a great walk.

**Section 1 – along Adams St**



Black Wallaby with pouch young in Dunkeld



Rod and Ruth along the walk



The path



An open *Scleroderma cepa* with spores exposed



A paddock of Grey Kangaroos





Grey Kangaroos



The very pale yellow fungus



The large River Red Gum – *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*



Looking back to the two large trees



The Yellow Flat Worm



A scarred tree - perhaps from a lightning strike



One of the new bridges over the Wannon River – Mt Sturgeon in the distance





Mt Sturgeon behind the trees



The meadow

**Section 3 – the open woodland with many orchids and fungi**



Greenhoods appear in this section of the walk



*Mycena* sp.



White-gilled Fungus with many little insects jumping out



Scented Sundew – *Drosera aberrans*



Flame Heath – *Stenantha conostephioides*

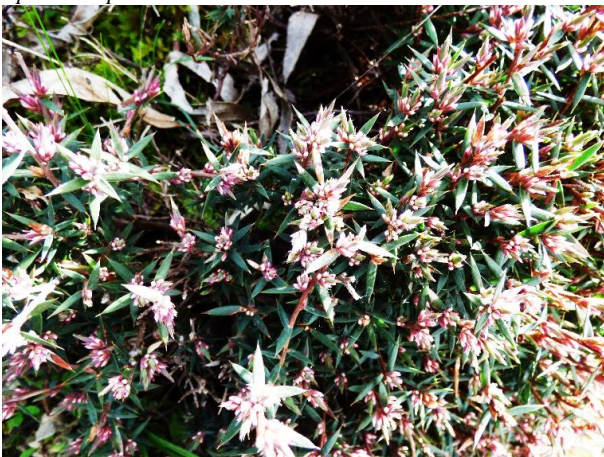




White and Pink Heath – *Epacris impressa*



*Epacris impressa*



*Calytrix tetragona* in bud



A Nodding Greenhood – *P. nutans*



A small Tall Greenhood – *P. longifolia*



Trim Greenhood – *P. concinna* – note the notched labellum



Note the narrow Greenhood in the background – it is also a *P. nutans* – but not completely unfurled.





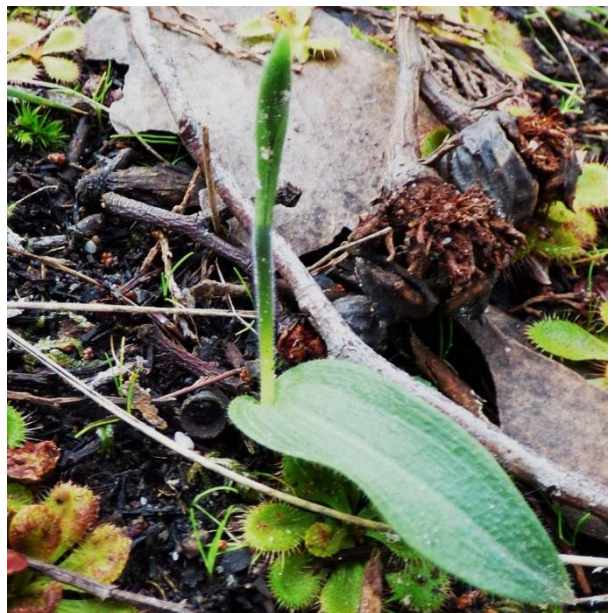
Seedpods developing on *Cyrtostylis reniformis* – Gnat Orchid



Note the pale veins along the leaf of the Gnat orchid



Slaty Helmet Orchid – *Corybas incurvus*



A *Glossodia major* in bud



Gnat Orchid – *Cyrtostylis reniformis* – so many in an area





Fairy Stool – *Coltricia cinnamomea* (note the pores on the underside)



Hairy bracket fungus – *Stereum* sp.



Funnel Pax – *Austropaxillus infundibuliformis*



A gilled fungus?



Views up to Mt Sturgeon



The path to Mt Sturgeon carpark



The map above shows the three different distinct sections we walked through starting in Dunkeld and walking to the Mt Sturgeon carpark.

### Birds on the Dunkeld to Mt Sturgeon Car Park Walk

<u>Common Name</u>
Crimson Rosella
Eastern Yellow Robin
Emu
Grey Fantail
Grey Shrike-thrush
Laughing Kookaburra
Musk Lorikeet
Pied Currawong
Red-browed Finch
Scarlet Robin (female only)
Striated Thornbill
Superb Fairy-wren
White-browed Scrubwren
White-eared Honeyeater
White-throated Treecreeper
Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Yellow-rumped Thornbill



### The Dunkeld Rifle Range

Some of us decided to inspect the Dunkeld Rifle Range to see if we could locate the Blue Fairies (*Pheladenia deformis*) that Dave had told us about. We entered on the old Rifle Range Rd and walked for about 200 m towards the target area looking for these orchids. But with no success. We did see the large patches of orchid leaves of *Caladenia*, *Cyrtostylis* and *Pyrochis*. (Rod and Diane returned on Tuesday and entered via Cooks Rd – and we did locate the Blue Fairies in flower. They were closer to the rifle range targets than we had thought on the Saturday.)

Our excursion ended at this point, but others had left from the Mt Sturgeon carpark.



Erect Guinea-flower – *Hibbertia riparia*



*Hibbertia* sp. 2



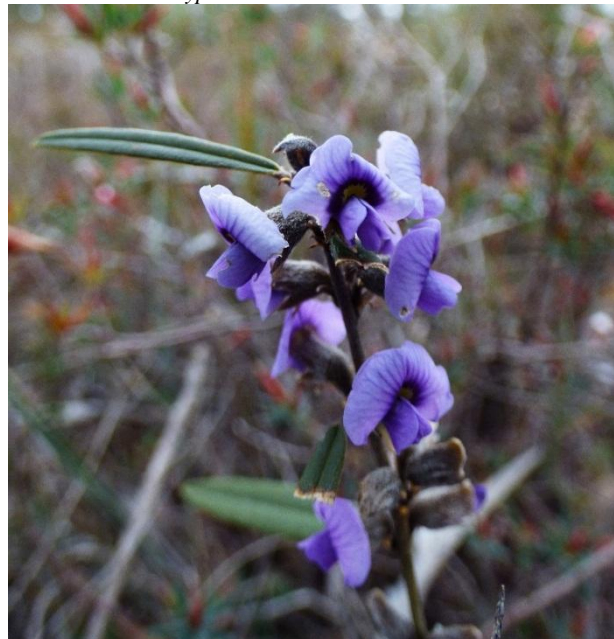
Twiggy Guinea-flower – *Hibbertia virgata*



Holly Grevillea – *Grevillea aquifolium*



Golden Heath – *Styphelia adscendens*



Common Hovea – *Hovea heterophylla*





Pink Beard Heath – *Leucopogon ericoides*



Small Gnat Orchid – very tiny – *Cyrtostylis reniformis*



Austral Grass Tree – *Xanthorrhoea australis* with flower bud spike



So many orchid leaves, buds and ants



Black-eyed Susan – *Tetratheca ciliata*



Fungus – like a golf ball – with a fungus covering the fungus





White Punk – *Piptoporus portentosus* – on Stringybark



Dave even saw this but we missed it – until Rod and Diane returned on Tuesday – Blue Fairy – *Pheladenia deformis*



A variety of heath on the Rifle Range

**Appendix:** Some plants listed for Section 3 of the Dunkeld-Wurgarri walk:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Acacia mearnsii</i> (Black Wattle)             | 20. <i>Kennedia prostrata</i> (Running Postman)         |
| 2. <i>Acacia melanoxylon</i> (Blackwood)             | 21. <i>Leptospermum continentale</i> (Prickly Tea-tree) |
| 3. <i>Acacia paradoxa</i> (Hedge Wattle)             | 22. <i>Leptospermum scoparium</i> (Manuka)              |
| 4. <i>Acacia verticillata</i> (Prickly Moses)        | 23. <i>Leucopogon ericoides</i> (Pink Beard Heath)      |
| 5. <i>Allocasuarina misera</i> (Small Sheoak)        | 24. <i>Lomandra filiformis</i> (Wattle Mat-rush)        |
| 6. <i>Banksia marginata</i> (Silver Banksia)         | 25. <i>Pterostylis alata</i> (Striped Greenhood)        |
| 7. <i>Callitris rhomboidea</i> (Oyster Bay Pine)     | 26. <i>Pterostylis concinna</i> (Trim Greenhood)        |
| 8. <i>Calytrix tetragona</i> (Common Fringe-myrtle)  | 27. <i>Pterostylis longifolia</i> (Tall Greenhood)      |
| 9. <i>Corybas incurvus</i> (Slaty Helmet Orchid)     | 28. <i>Pterostylis nana</i> (Dwarf Greenhood)           |
| 10. <i>Cyrtostylis reniformis</i> (Gnat Orchid)      | 29. <i>Pterostylis nutans</i> (Nodding Greenhood)       |
| 11. <i>Drosera aberrans</i> (Scented Sundew)         | 30. <i>Senecio odoratus</i> (Scented Groundsel)         |
| 12. <i>Eucalyptus aromaphloia</i> (Scent-bark)       | 31. <i>Stenanthera conostephioides</i> (Flame Heath)    |
| 13. <i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i> (River Red Gum)  | 32. <i>Stenanthera conostephioides</i> (Flame Heath)    |
| 14. <i>Eucalyptus obliqua</i> (Messmate Stringybark) | 33. <i>Styphelia adscendens</i> (Golden Heath)          |
| 15. <i>Eucalyptus ovata</i> (Swamp Gum)              | 34. <i>Styphelia humifusa</i> (Cranberry Heath)         |
| 16. <i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i> (Manna Gum)          | 35. <i>Tetratheca ciliata</i> (Pink Bells)              |
| 17. <i>Glossodia major</i> (Wax-lip Orchid)          | 36. <i>Thysanotus tuberosus</i> (Common Fringe-lily)    |
| 18. <i>Hibbertia riparia</i> (Erect Guinea-flower)   | 37. <i>Wurmbia dioica</i> (Early Nancy)                 |
| 19. <i>Hibbertia virgata</i> (Twiggy Guinea-flower)  | 38. <i>Xanthorrhoea australis</i> (Austral Grass-tree)  |