

The Murrumbidgee Naturalist



June 2016 - Issue #238

Journal of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

PO Box 541, LEETON 2705 ISSN-1327-1172

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Objects of the Club

To facilitate and promote the knowledge of natural history, and to encourage the preservation and protection of the Australian natural environment, especially that of the Murrumbidgee River Valley



**The Group walking up Jacks Creek in the Cocoparra National Park,
lichens and bark of a Dwyers Gum** by Rowena Whiting

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CONTRIBUTIONS

For the July issue by
Wednesday 6 July

To Rowena Whiting

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*Hear about Environmental Water in
the Riverina at the meeting.
Explore Duncans Creek.*

Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc. Office Bearers and Annual Subscriptions

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Secretary:	Penny Williams	6953 3524			
Treasurer:	Phil Tenison	6953 4869	Website Co-ordinator:	Phillip Williams	6953 3524

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE SECOND THURSDAY EACH MONTH, EXCEPT JANUARY, AT THE Yellow Room, Leeton Library, Sycamore Street at 7.30 PM

FIELD TRIPS NORMALLY TAKE PLACE ON THE FOLLOWING WEEKEND.

INTENDING NEW MEMBERS, GUESTS AND VISITORS WELCOME.

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Annual Subscriptions:	Family \$45.00	Adult/Single \$35.00	Journal only/Concession	\$25.00	

Opinions expressed by authors are their own and do not necessarily represent the policies or views of the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists Inc.

Our celebration for World Environment Day

Quite a number of MFN members congregated at the Griffith Cinema for the showing of Oddball. The event was organised by Dieuwer and Michelle and Joanne gave short presentations of the threatened species in this area and on council's environment projects and encouraged people to plant local native species in their gardens; respectively.

People mingled in the foyer area for afternoon tea and took the opportunity to look at the MFN display stand with information, along with National Parks and the City Council respectively. The latter were inviting people to take a seedling to plant. Our thanks must go to Nella Smith for organising the stands and her hand in providing the refreshments including her scones.



Photos by Penny Williams and Rowena Whiting
 Top: The Organisers Michelle, Nella, Gloria, Dieuwer and Joanne
 Left Eric and Virginia with young visitors.
 Above: MFN display stands

We are on Facebook - The 'Murrumbidgee Field Naturalist Inc.' Is now showing up in Facebook. You can find it by searching the above name and request to be a friend. If improvements can be added, I'm happy for input. I've added friends that I have on my Facebook list. You can also be a friend by request. Virginia Tarr

A GILLENBAH IDYLL

On the 15th May, several members visited the “Magic Garden” of Gillenbah State Forest.

The ground was a soft green carpet and a large choir of birdsong filled the air, so much so that it was difficult to isolate the individual calls and the diversity of trees was interesting.

This forest had something for everyone. Wherever one looked there would be a point of interest for someone. Odd shaped ant nests, some with tall chimneys, some with parapets or side projections, but no real conformity throughout. Big Bush Cockroaches that ambled across our path, and Golden Orb spiders that caught the unwary. The plant enthusiasts had their heads down and the birdos heads were up.

The recent rains had allowed animal imprints and kangaroos, foxes, cats, goannas and snakes had used the same track we were following.

We ambled for several kilometres observing and absorbing all beauty of the forest until lunchtime, after which we visited Lake Talbot to follow up on a previous orchid sighting.

A lovely and rewarding day of audio and visual delights.



Sue Chittick-Dalton

Gillenbah Birdlist

Crested Pigeon	Galah
Mulga Parrot	Red-capped Robin
Flame Robin	Golden Whistler (H)
Eastern Yellow Robin(H)	Rufous Whistler
Grey Fantail	Wren (sp) (H)
White-browed Babbler	Weebill
Southern Whiteface	Yellow Thornbill
Chestnut-rumped Thornbill	Inland Thornbill
Spiny-cheeked H/e	Little Friarbird
Noisy Miner	Brown-headed H/e
White-plumed H/e	Striped H/e
Striated Pardalote	Pee-wee
Magpie	Australian Raven
White-winged Chough	Pied Butcherbird

Lake Talbot Birdlist compiled by Max O'Sullivan

Little Pied Cormorant	Pied Cormorant
Little Black Cormorant	Great Cormorant
Black Swan	Black Duck
Grey Teal	Whistling Kite
Grey Fantail	Pied Currawong
Australian Raven	Magpie
Pee-Wee	Yellow Rosella
Red Wattlebird	



Photos clockwise from top by Rowena Whiting
Green Moss, Golden Orb Spider, Parson's Bands
Eriochilus autumnalis. (Nella Smith), fungi, ant
'skyscrapers x2, Hakea Wattle *Acacia hakioides*.
Plants were seen at Lake Talbot



Jack's Creek on a Cool Day

Saturday, May 28th, 9am excursion was held at Jack's Creek with 5 of us braving the overcast skies and clouds threatening to drench us as we headed along the track through the gorge.



On arrival we spotted a Swamp Wallaby with a joey that slid out of its mother's pouch and hopped along behind mother who then decided it was best to go further afield. We were also greeted by a bellow of sounds from further up the hill range. Found that in the distance, there were goats moving about.

Max spotted a Wedge-tailed Eagle flying overhead. Nella spotted an Eastern Yellow Robin, Golden Whistler and a Grey Shrike-thrush.

On the walk there was a flock of White-browed Babblers, an occasional Speckled Warbler, Buff-rumped Thornbills, Inland Thornbills, Yellow Thornbills, White-plumed Honeyeaters, White-eared Honeyeaters, a Goshawk species, and a few Ravens.

On the flora subject, the area was carpeted in fresh green ferns, lichens, mosses, small rosette leaves and grasses after the recent rains. Nella and Eric found a Leek Orchid on the walking slope up to the ridge and I found a small patch of the Autumn Greenhood Orchids *Pterostylis revoluta*. We saw a further patch on the down hill track.

The rock formations were just as spectacular as ever in the strong orange, red, brown and black streaking colours, made more so with



the rain showers overnight. Some were fascinated by the ripple rock that was layered at one stage when there was a river beach creating a tell-tale event of rippling sand covered into immortality.

On the track up the slope and looking back over yonder to the sheer rock face, we noticed a large oval hole in the rock that had an interesting dangling cream coloured ribbon fringe around the inner entrance of the hole. Nella came up eventually to join us and she solved our mystery. It was a beehive!

There were a number of fresh wombat scats found along the way in the gorge.

By the time we reached the picnic area, the scattered misty showers were beginning. We stood under the sheltered BBQ for a cuppa and admired the colours of the Yellow Box tree trunks and the Speckled Warbler scrounging around nearby.

Next stop was Mt. Bingar to find the past Autumn Greenhoods. On the way I saw a couple of emus, many Grey kangaroos, two Ringneck Parrots (probably) fly by, Bronze wing Pigeons, a couple of Willy Wagtails and Noisy Miners. Reaching the summit, we found it to be in the clouds raining heavily. So we back tracked partly down the hill and

stopped for a look around for the endemic Pomaderris found here on a previous excursions, as the rain had stopped. [we found a few small ones which had signs of being eaten. Ed.] Found another Autumn Greenhood. We said our farewells and went our own way. I stopped further down the road again and found another patch of the Greenhoods.

As I drove along the dirt (water -filled potholed) road, I came across Box trees filled with a flock of Blue Bonnet Parrots and Noisy Miners.

It was a worthwhile day of refreshing air, colours of the local landscape and warm company.

Virginia Tarr



Jacks Creek – cliff face showing bedding of the sedimentary rocks
Autumn Greenhood
Blue Bonnet – Graham Russell

Ripple Rock

There have been very few fossils found in the Cocoparra Ranges. This slab with fossil ripples is in Ladysmith Glen. It records a stream had a sandy bottom 370 million years ago where now there is a cliff face.

Eric Whiting



Fungi hiding in tree bark

Whilst looking for lichens on the bark of a dead White Cypress Pine near Jacks Creek I noticed shiny black blobs about a 1cm in diameter in cracks in the bark. When they dried the black turned to a mid-grey and the surface revealed a coating of fine short white hairs. The underneath had translucent grey gills showing they were basidiomycete fungi. Searching through the pictures of Bruce Fruher's Fungi book I think they were the fruiting bodies of *Resupinatus cinerascens*.



Eric Whiting

Introducing our new Local Landcare Coordinator

Murrumbidgee Irrigation will host one of the new Local Landcare Coordinators who has been employed to boost landcare and natural resource management in the irrigated areas of the Riverina.

More than 10 community organisations in southern NSW have been successful in securing these four-year, part-time positions, which are funded under the NSW Government's \$15 million Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative.



Kerri Keely will be based at Murrumbidgee Irrigation in Griffith to work with farmers, the Landcare Irrigation Collective and community groups in Griffith, Leeton, Darlington Point, Coleambally, Rankin Springs and surrounding areas.

Kerri has been active with environmental education programs for schools and farming groups in the Riverina over the last ten years. She is keen to encourage people to become more aware of the importance of the natural environment and how each one of us can work to make our environment more sustainable.

The Local Landcare Coordinators will engage with and assist local growers in a range of sustainable agriculture and natural resource management projects. The Landcare Coordinator positions are designed to renew the government-community relationship and unlock the potential of the thousands of volunteers in the Landcare network.

Kerri can be contacted on 0428396826 or kkeely@mli.org.au or at the MI office in Griffith

Sue Chittick-Dalton has been spreading the word – she recently gave a presentation about the Field Naturalist Club to members of the Griffith U3A. Sue's interest in and enthusiasm for birds, animals, fungi, plants, in fact everything in nature, is an inspiration to us all. Her effort and time in preparation were much appreciated as was the sharing of her knowledge. Well done, Sue and a big thank from the U3A group. Contributed by Nan Simpson (wearing her U3A hat).

Dingo - Fox - Ground Bird Relationship

The following has been taken from a letter from *Kurtis Lindsay* sent to Birding-*aus* mailing list relating his experiences in Queensland and northern NSW. Contributed by Max O'Sullivan.

I have been following this fox - night parrot discussion closely as it is something I am very interested in.

From 2011 I worked as an Ecologist consultant in the Brigalow Belt and North-West Highlands of Queensland for a few years. During this time I surveyed dozens of large cattle stations from the NSW/QLD border to north of Mt Isa and east to Ingham. Surveys always including the setting of camera traps.

When I set camera traps I recorded Dingoes and feral cats on every property surveyed. But I never once recorded Foxes.

Interestingly, on every property, I regularly recorded Bush Stone Curlew, Bustard, high abundance of Quail species, and Squatter Pigeon (or Spinifex Pigeon in Mt Isa) as well as small macropods like Rufous Bettong, Spectacled Hare Wallaby, Northern Nailtail Wallaby, and Northern Brown Bandicoot.

Habitat availability was only part of the picture as most sites I surveyed were heavily cleared cattle stations with only small, often degraded remnants. There was never the amount of remnant woodland that you find in the NSW rangelands.

Cross the border into NSW where I later worked (still in the Southern Brigalow Belt bioregion!) and all of the above native birds and mammals I listed that were once in NSW are now functionally extinct (as of ~100 years)! The list of once common species now endangered (or extinct) in northern and central NSW includes Bustard, Bush Stone Curlew, Squatter Pigeon, Rufous Bettong and more. What's more, I found foxes in high abundance on every property I surveyed in this area.

Why did I get so many "Critical Weight Range Mammals" and "Ground Nesting Birds" in QLD and none in NSW? My only hypothesis is owing to the lack of foxes in QLD. Why the lack of foxes? I put it down to the serious dingo/wild dog "infestation" or dare I say "benefit" in QLD.

Studies have shown that dingoes/wild dogs suppress fox abundance where fox and dog/dingo co-occur. At present there is a lack of correlative studies that show the tri-partisan relationship between these two predators and their prey items, particularly the predation sensitive ground bird and CRW mammal species I listed above.

All the dingo/dog scats I collected during my time in QLD were sent to Barbara Triggs and the contents were overwhelmingly dominated by *Macropus* sp. fur. In contrast, foxes are known to eat far more small mammal, bird and insect prey.

Cats are a serious problem, and habitat destruction is obviously the most serious issue biodiversity faces in NSW at present, but foxes are the main reason why we have lost so many medium sized mammals and ground nesting birds from NSW and Victoria.

Fauna species, particularly birds, will always find a way to disperse and return to available habitat when the one thing preventing them is removed (In this case, foxes).

If adequate funding was allocated toward an active fox eradication program (or more politically sensitive, if dingoes/wild dogs were allowed to live) across central, northern and eastern NSW. We would see a rapid increase in many if not all of the species I listed above, especially the nomadic ground birds like Bustards, Bush Stone Curlew and Squatter Pigeon. Such birds would soon colonise NSW from north of the border and spread south, eventually back to their former distribution.

If we did the same and controlled foxes across the Western Division of NSW we may also see an increase in arid specialists like Grasswrens, Night Parrot and the like.

Likewise, further east we would see a population increase in Ground Parrot and Eastern Bristlebirds.

Remove foxes from most of New South Wales and we will 1. Prevent extinctions and 2. experience the luxury of iconic bird species returning to their former place in our landscape.

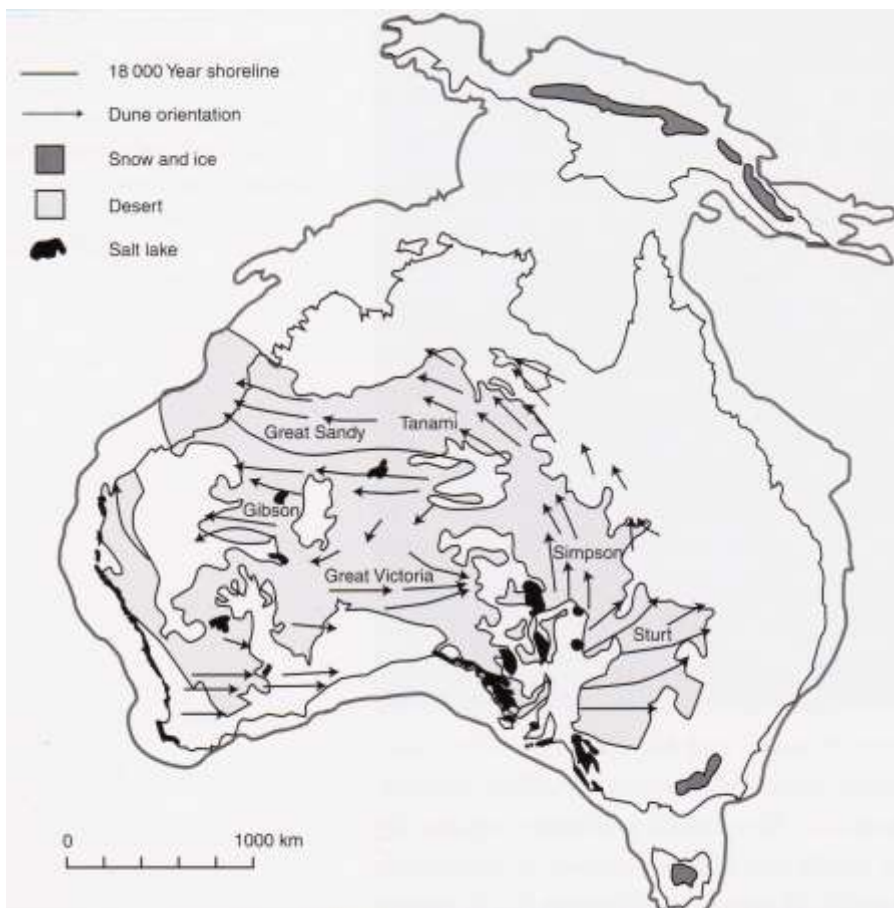
More information on this topic can be found at [http://birding-*aus*.org/mailman/listinfo/birding-*aus*_birding-*aus*.org](http://birding-<i>aus</i>.org/mailman/listinfo/birding-<i>aus</i>_birding-<i>aus</i>.org)



Where did the sand come from?

Gillenbah State Forest straddles the Newell Highway just south of Narrandera. On the map it looks like one homogenous forest with the larger part east of the Highway. So why did I choose to lead the May excursion to the western side?

The eastern side is typical Narrandera Range hill country with skeletal soils over the underlying (and frequently outcropping) sandstone rock. This supports the usual Dwyers Mallee Gum – White Cypress Pine vegetation we see on the rest of the Ranges. Westwards however leads down to deep sandy soils. The vegetation as a result differs. Species more akin to mallee habitats grow here, notably Grey Mulga *Acacia brachybotrya* and Small-leaf Waxflower *Philotheca difformis* – nee *Eriostemon difformis*.



Why all this sand? The adjoining plains westwards are the usual heavy clay soils of the Riverina. The answer is geological history. We may think that we are in a fairly dry climate now, but in the past Australia has been much drier and either warmer or at times much colder. In fact Australia has been warmer for most of the last 60 million years. Before that it was about the same as now but much more humid – and we were much closer to the South Pole. That was when dinosaurs roamed through the rainforests of Gondwanaland to which we were still attached.

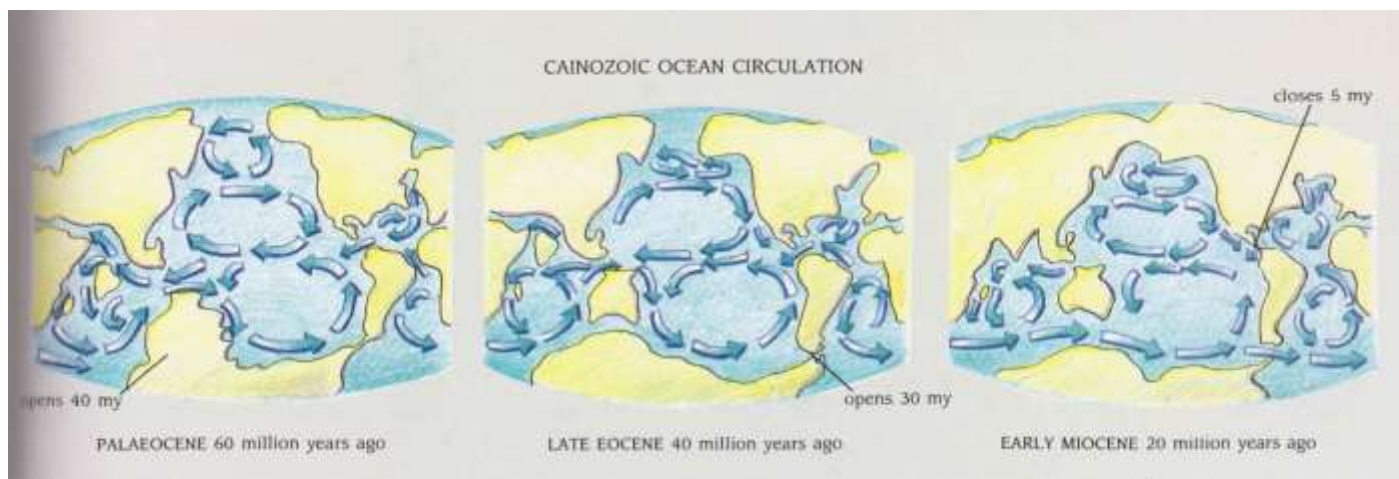
Whilst South America, Africa and our continent were still part of Gondwanaland, ocean currents were restricted to being north-south aligned. Warm equatorial air was drawn down well southwards resulting in very little temperature gradient. As the super-continent

broke up leaving Antarctica stuck around the Pole, a gap opened up allowing a Circum-Antarctic Current to develop, curtailing the north-south circulation in the other oceans. Antarctica ceased to receive the warm equatorial air and began to cool with eventual formation of the Polar Ice Cap. The Circum-Antarctic flow also resulted in the predominantly westerly winds, notably the Furious Fifties and the Roaring Forties. Although Australia separated from Antarctica 20 million years ago a clear deep sea passage was not developed until about 30 million years when South America lost the shallow link via the Falkland Island archipelago.

Due to various cycles our planet goes through (see my article in the February issue), the general cooling has not been even, with cold periods cycling with warmer ones. The cooler periods progressively became more frequent and more severe until around 100,000 years ago the world experienced the first of the present series of Ice Ages. The last period began around 30,000 years ago, peaked at 23-18,000 years ago and ended around 10,000 years ago. Since then there has been smaller fluctuations - the last cold period (the Mini Ice Age) was between 1450 and 1750 AD.

At the height of each event so much water was bound up in the ice caps that sea levels dropped dramatically. More importantly for the Riverina the cold air was drier, severely reducing rainfall. Rivers stopped flowing for long periods. The rivers had carried enormous amounts of erosion material from the mountains into their lower basins. Plant life struggled to exist and large areas became cold deserts. The prevailing westerly winds scoured the denuded soils. The finer clay particles were frequently lifted into the atmosphere and carried thousands of kilometres. The heavier sand particles travelled closer to the ground as mobile dunes. Where dunes ran up against hills they piled up as deep drifts. Our ranges with their steep scarp slopes were particularly effective barriers, hence the deep sand aprons such as at Gillenbah. This effect can also be seen

at Narrandera, and the west side of the Cocoparra Ranges north of Homestead Creek. (South of there has been protected by the McPherson, Tabbita, and other Ranges around these.)



Just how much sand has been deposited and at what periods is unknown. It will take much work extracting deep core samples and accurately dating them (expensive and difficult to do) to find this out. Note: I have not touched on the source-bordering dunes. They too are yet another story.

Drier periods do not only occur during Ice Ages. Warmer periods also are drier as warm air retains more of the moisture and therefore less likely to release rain. In addition higher day time temperatures increase the evaporation of that which does fall. It is no wonder why Australia progressively lost its general rainforest cover to the more tolerant eucalypt forests and then to the extensive inland deserts.

Although plants have adapted to the arid inland conditions there is a limit beyond which they cannot exist. The exposed soil is then very vulnerable to wind scouring. Our widespread clearing of land for spring crops just exasperates the situation. If, as predicted, average temperatures rise another couple of degrees most of the country inland of the Divide could become desert.

Eric Whiting

Illustration sources: *The Geology of Australia* by David Johnson (map); *Reading the Rocks* by Mary E White (Oceans)

Campbell Swamp Boardwalk

The boardwalk at Campbell Swamp is at a stage where regular repairs are necessary to ensure its safety. Eighteen months ago there had been a number of broken planks as well as some destruction of the hand rails that necessitated some immediate attention.

Terry Smith fortunately came to our rescue by offering over 30 planks that he had milled in his work shed from some pine tree trunks that he had collected. Thanks to him and with Neil Palframan's help, the rotting and broken planks were replaced and broken rails removed.

However, the continued effects of exposure to the weather over the years had necessitated another repair effort and again with Terry's donation of planks and Neil's expertise, labour and use of his equipment 34 more planks were replaced on 27 May. After further breakages of the hand rails, it was decided to remove all of them just to ensure the remaining ones weren't vandalised as well.

On behalf of the club, I would like to express my grateful thanks to both Terry and Neil for their generous help in ensuring the boardwalk remains in a relatively safe condition for people to use for the present.

Now the problem!

The MFN it seems is still responsible for the upkeep of the boardwalk and although on council administered land, they accept no responsibility for any of the structures – boardwalk and hide – on the site. So Council claim any repairs must be done at the club's expense. The boardwalk and hide were never given final council



approval despite approvals being given for the club to do the initial construction. The final Occupational Certificate was never applied for – hence the dilemma we find ourselves in at the moment.

For the council to assume responsibility for their upkeep in the future, the structures would need to pass a full engineer inspection and pass other liability requirements – the cost of which would have to be borne by the club. In the present situation the Council is concerned about risk insurance and who is responsible if an accident should happen – Council or the MFN?

If the Council feels they may be responsible, **an aspect they are presently assessing**, they would need to undergo a risk assessment based on their building surveyor's report after an engineer's inspection. If this is undertaken, there is a real risk of the boardwalk being closed to the public if not deemed sufficiently safe – a situation that would be catastrophic for the club financially and for the people who use the site for birdwatching and photography in particular.

As a result of the issues raised I have organised an initial inspection within the next week at which the Council will advise us of the situation from their perspective as to where we go from here and what they recommend in order to keep the boardwalk open.

Max O'Sullivan

Our Trip to Alice Springs

At last month's Field Naturalist meeting we gave a presentation on our trip to Alice Springs. The trip was for 20 days over 5,000km in April of this year taking in the key spots of Uluru, the Olgas and Kings Canyon, Alice Springs, West McDonald Ranges and a small section of the East McDonald Ranges. We travelled up via Coober Pedy and returned through Williams Creek on the Oodnadatta track, Flinders Ranges and Gluepot. The car was packed to the gunnels in the Prado which was largely our home for 20 days, 10 days in cabins and 9 nights camping in the tent.

All the places above were spectacular for different reasons and all a must see for all Australians. Hard to identify favourites. Uluru is wonderful because of its sheer size, colour and variable surface textures. The Olgas shape was fascinating and different from every angle while Kings Canyon was so vast and the layers of rocks seemed to provide a canvas of wall to wall colour and texture.

To get the best out of these places you need to be prepared to do a lot of walking. We didn't get to climb Uluru as it was closed due to windy conditions on the day. Not sure we would have done it anyway after hearing about its cultural sensitivity in the talk by our guide on the Mala walk. Sunsets and sunrises with early starts and late finishes trying to get a good spot on the platform or in the carpark kept us on our toes and to a tight schedule. Up at 6.00am or earlier and to bed at 10pm.



We were excited to see a dingo walking on the road on the way to the Olgas only to see others at Kings Canyon. One in particular was up close and personal as he walked across our tent as it lay on the ground before we put it up. We also heard them howling in the night.

We did not see a huge amount of birds on the trip but standout new birds for us were the Painted Finch and Spinifex Pigeon, plus a few we got a glimpse of and were possibly a Dusky Grass-wren and Grey Falcon.



We saw loads of endangered birds at the Desert Park in Alice Springs. What a wonderful enclosure for viewing rarities. We also went on the night time nocturnal tour where we saw eight endangered mammals including the Bilby and Marla.

Ormiston's George Creek crossing was a challenge trying to keep camera gear dry. Water was over waist height and the rocks were very slippery. The gorges have fabulous colours of purple, red and grey. It took us five hours to do a three hour walk. Cameras and binoculars got a real workout. Time seems to slip by easily and you don't come across many

fellow walkers. Important to take plenty of snacks and water.

Redbank Gorge was a lot of fun paddling up to four of the pools in our car tubes and clambering over the rocks to the next pool. Not for the faint hearted and very cold. The tubes kept us just high enough out of the water to make the temperature tolerable.



Our quad bikes tour took place 17 km out of Alice Springs on a 15,000ha cattle station called Undoolya Station, interestingly over three or four generations of farming they consider Herefords as the breed of choice on the station. Fortunately neither of us was the one person to fall off and thoroughly enjoyed the experience driving in the sandy creek beds and rocky tracks over the station. We did stay to tracks and didn't go off destroying vegetation along the way.

Photos:
Uluru by day (previous page),
Spinifex Pidgeon
Dingo walks over our tent to check for food
Uluru by night

The challenge is to find Phil's business card at William Creek Hotel on the Oodnadatta track among the many thousands pinned to the roof and walls of the rustic old typically Australian building.

Euros at the Flinders Rangers had us driving precariously to our next venue late at night. They jumped all over the road and we felt incredibly lucky not to hit one. Don't drive on those roads on dusk.

Gluepot was a treat on the way back with a night and early morning viewing in the bird hides. A bit alarming to see the competition that goes on between species at the drinking trough. Galahs and crows get their fill first with the bronze wings and mulga parrots having to wait patiently for their turn. The visitors centre is a credit to the volunteers responsible for its creation.

Could not recommend a trip to the Red Centre more highly. Even washing the car brings back wonderful memories of the iconically red earth.

Phil and Kathy Tenison



M E M B E R S ' S I G H T I N G S

These sightings are from members' observations. Please check with the relevant person before quoting any record.

Yellow-throated Miner	'Mountain View' via Leeton	April/May	Graham Russell
Graham reports unusual numbers about the farm.			
Pallid Cuckoo [adult]	Fivebough and Gibbs Road	30/04/16	Keith Hutton
Red-necked Avocet [6]	Fivebough Wetlands	11/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
European Goldfinch [30+]	Fivebough Wetlands	11/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
Brolga [3]	Fivebough Wetlands	11/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
Glossy Ibis [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	11/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
Golden Whistler [male]	11 Pendula St, Leeton	13/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
It was quite a surprise to see this beautiful bird in my backyard.			
Olive-backed Oriole [male]	Wattle Dam Binya State Forest	14/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
Blue-billed Duck [20+]	Griffith Waste Water Ponds	14/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
Musk Duck [4]	Griffith Waste Water Ponds	14/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
Pink-eared Duck [100+]	Griffith Saleyard Ponds	14/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
Flame Robin [2 males]	Gillenbah State Forest	15/05/16	Warrick Bradney
Hairy-nosed Wombat	Leeton in a backyard	21/05/16	Andrew Thompson
Wedge-tailed Eagle [1]	'Yarrabimby' via Leeton	22/05/16	Andrew Thompson
Little Eagle/Wedge-tailed Eagle/Black-shouldered Kite/Brown Falcon/Black Falcon			
Swamp Harrier [1 of each]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/16	Keith Hutton
White-faced Heron [29]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/16	Keith Hutton
Black Swan [130]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/16	Keith Hutton
Black-winged Stilt [220]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/16	Keith Hutton
Australian Shelduck [10]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/16	Keith Hutton
Masked Lapwing [40]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/16	Keith Hutton
Glossy Ibis [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/16	Keith Hutton
Fox [1]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/16	Keith Hutton
European Brown Hare [2]	Fivebough Wetlands	22/05/16	Keith Hutton
Brolga [5]	Tuckerbil Wetlands	25/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
Tuckerbil is being filled at this time and should attract plenty of waterbirds from now on.			
Ground Cuckoo-shrike [5]	Koonadan Historic site	25/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
Whistling Kite [9]	The Basin Dam at Koonadan	25/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
The kites were all perched in the dead trees in the dam.			
Brown Quail [8]	Campbell Swamp	26/05/16	Neil Palframan
Pink Cockatoo [2]	Campbell Swamp flyover	27/05/16	Neil Palframan
Spotted Nightjar [2]	Bogalong Hills, Narrandera	27/05/16	Nella Smith
Varied Sitella	Bogalong Hills, Narrandera	27/05/16	Nella Smith
Diamond Firetail	Bogalong Hills, Narrandera	27/05/16	Nella Smith
Ground Cuckoo-shrike [2]	Whitton Stock Route Rd	28/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
Cockatiel [6]	Whitton Stock Route Rd	28/05/16	Max O'Sullivan
Midge Orchid <i>Genoplesium rufum</i>	Narrandera	25/05/16	Nella Smith

Membership subscriptions are due on the 30th June

The membership renewal date of the 30th June has rolled around again..

Please send your money to the Treasurer, Phil Tenison, promptly to PO Box 541, Leeton, NSW 2705 or make a bank transfer to the MFN's bank account. It is BSB 062 564, A/c 10039396. (Commonwealth Bank), Don't forget to note your name so Phil can identify it on the Bank Statement.

Any queries Phil can be contacted on 02 69 534869.

**** COMING EVENTS ****

- 9 June Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7.30pm.
Speaker: Erin Lenon from **Office of Environment and Heritage at Yanco** - topic: **Environmental Water in the Riverina**
Contact: Penny Williams 6953 3524
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com
- 26 June Sunday** **Outing: Duncans Creek, Cocoparra National Park**
Wombat activity has been seen here in the past; we will be walking up the creek. We will start from the Mt Bingar road.
Meet: Yenda Post Office at 8:30am.
Bring: morning tea and lunch.
Contact: Eric or Rowena on 6953 2612 if intending to come.
- 6 July Wednesday** **Copy for the July newsletter is due. Please send to Rowena.**
Email: ericwhiting4@bigpond.com. Phone: 6953 2612.
- 14 July Thursday** **Monthly Meeting** in the Yellow Room at the **Leeton Library**, Sycamore St., Leeton commencing at 7.30pm.
Topic:
Contact: Penny Williams 6953 3524
Email: murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com
- Other events**
- 3 -4 September** **BIGnet Conference in Leeton**
MFN are hosting this event – more details near the time.
- 24 – 25 September** **Spring Camp at Yathong (tentative)**
This will be followed by a plant search of the Merrimerriva Range nearby
A reasonable level of fitness is required for this
Contact: Nella Smith 69591210
- 1 – 10 October** **Australian Naturalists Network** Get-together for 2016 will be held in at Woodman Point Recreation Camp, Western Australia. Details from Penny Williams murrumbidgeefieldnaturalists@gmail.com
- 7-9 October** **Birds of the Bush Festival at Rankins Springs**
Guest Speaker: Tim Low. A biologist, environmental consultant and writer of numerous books: "The New Nature" "Feral Future and "Where Song Began" amongst others.

This **Hairy-nosed Wombat** was found in a Leeton backyard digging to get under the fence. Andrew Thompson came to the rescue. He was able to get it into a crate and take it out to his property in the Collinroobie Hills. He chose an inactive hole and the wombat wasted no time in disappearing down it. He has set up a sensor camera close by to monitor any movement. Looking forward to see what happens.

Andrew would like to hear from anyone with spare piping that he could use in culverts to save any small animals from getting flooded.

Photo is by Phillip Williams

