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# Field Nats News No 321



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Governor of Victoria

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August 2021

## From the President

The due date for FNN 322 will be Tuesday August 3rd.  
However, as the editor may be away, we ask that copy be submitted earlier if possible. Use: [joan.broadberry@gmail.com](mailto:joan.broadberry@gmail.com)

The variability and habits of flies (Diptera) never ceases to amaze me. *Odontomyia* spp (photo 1) are often seen on foliage but their larvae are aquatic.

A couple of weeks ago I noticed a dark brown insect sitting on a concrete balustrade with its abdomen inserted deeply into a small fissure in the concrete itself. It was clearly ovipositing, the terminal section of its abdomen stretched into a fine, elongate tube. It was *Boreoides*, a member of the family Stratiomyidae (Soldier flies). Once it had finished its exertions, I lifted the concrete and noticed a small cluster of opalescent, creamy-white eggs deposited on a thin layer of moss (photo 2).

The females (photo 4) are strange looking insects and do not resemble what most people regard as flies. They are apterous and therefore flightless. I often see them wandering about over leaf litter on their spindly legs in the autumn and early winter. I have observed them ovipositing into rotting logs and moist, com-



1. *Odontomyia* sp. resting at night. Photo: Max Campbell



2 *Boreoides* sp. eggs. Photo: Max Campbell

posting leaf litter but never into concrete. The males (photo 5) have a typical fly appearance.

The eggs were quickly over-run by small mites (photo 3) that immediately started feeding on them so I hold little hope for their survival. To make matters worse, small (10mm) wasps of the genus *Monomachus* lay their own eggs into the *Boreoides* eggs. When the pupae are mature, female pupae may produce up to 4 wasps while the smaller male pupae produce only one. I expect that mites and wasps must effectively regulate the population of *Boreoides*.

Other stratiomyids are common in our gardens throughout the year. Window flies, or garden flies, *Exaireta spiniger* (photo 7) are common. Their larvae (photo 6) can be seen on the inside

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### August 2021

#### Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> – Fungi Group Foray: *Noojee – Toorong Falls circuit*

Meet at 10.30 am at Toorong Falls car park, Toorong Falls Road. From Melbourne, head east along the Princes Freeway turning left at the Drouin exit towards Noojee. Or take the Warburton Hwy to Yarra Junction, turning onto the Yarra Junction-Noojee Road for a more scenic trip through the ranges. From the Noojee township, head east for around 3km then left onto the Toorong Falls Road which terminates at the Reserve. Melway Map X928 B5. Vic Roads Map 81 B7.

**Prior registration essential.** <https://goo.gl/maps/zp7VTnd2jjiXQFMC8>

Contact Carol Page: [cpage356@gmail.com](mailto:cpage356@gmail.com); 0438 446 973

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Fungi Group Meeting: *Ophiocordyceps*** The genus *Ophiocordyceps* contains about 140 species that grow on insects. A 48-million-year-old fossil of an ant in the death grip of *Ophiocordyceps unilateralis* was discovered in Germany. Speaker: Melvin Xu who is the fungi group co-ordinator, a research assistant at The University of Melbourne, School of Biosciences and is very involved with the MYCOcommunity. Melvin will talk about this fascinating genus and let us know how his research is progressing. **Prior registration essential.**

Contact Carol Page: [cpage356@gmail.com](mailto:cpage356@gmail.com); 0438 446 973

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> - Fauna Survey Group Meeting: *Mesic lizards at an arid edge: Exploring the climatic basis of range limits in the Delicate Skink (Lampropholis delicata)*.** Speaker: Jules Farquhar, Honours graduate, Monash University.

**Prior registration essential.**

Contact David De Angelis: [d.deangelis@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:d.deangelis@latrobe.edu.au); 0409 519 829

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> – Marine Research Group Meeting: Prior registration essential.**

**To be advised.** Contact Leon Altoff: 9530 4180 AH; 0428 669 773

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> - Microscopy Group Practical Meeting: Compound, dissecting and digital microscopes set up for your use.** BYO specimens or view our slide collection with guidance and help with ID. Videos of live microscopic organisms. **Prior registration essential.**

Contact Philippa Burgess: 0409 866 389

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> – Botany Group Meeting:** Speaker: Bill Aitchison, Acacia Study Group, Australian Native Plant Society. .

**Prior registration essential.** Contact Ken Griffiths: [botany@fncv.org.au](mailto:botany@fncv.org.au)

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>—FNCV Council meeting (via Zoom) 8 pm.** Apologies and agenda items to Wendy Gare: [admin@fncv.org.au](mailto:admin@fncv.org.au) Max will email the link.

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> – Day Group Meeting: 10.30 am, speaker at 11 am. *Travels to the Sub-Antarctic Islands of New Zealand and Macquarie Island.*** Speaker: Heather Ducat, Peninsula Field Naturalists Club Inc. **Prior registration essential.**

Contact Joan Broadberry—email preferred, [joan.broadberry@gmail.com](mailto:joan.broadberry@gmail.com) or 9846 1218

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> – Geology Group Meeting: *Indigenous Use of Geological Resources.* Prior registration essential.** Speaker: Dr Gary Presland, author, historian, archaeologist, *Victorian Naturalist* editor and our FNCV Librarian.

Contact Ken Griffiths: [geology@fncv.org.au](mailto:geology@fncv.org.au)

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> – Juniors Group Meeting: 7.30 pm . *Birthday Party***—theme: Fauna and Flora of the Grampians

**Advance registration required.** Contact Dr Patricia Amaya: [juniors@fncv.org.au](mailto:juniors@fncv.org.au)

The calendar has been prepared on the tentative assumption that, in August, meetings will be held at the FNCV Hall, 1 Gardenia St. Blackburn at 8 pm unless otherwise advised.



As the Covid 19 situation is fluid, this may change at any time. Activities may be cancelled or meetings switched to Zoom.

There is a numbers cap in the hall. You are therefore asked to register for both meetings and excursions as soon as you can, preferably supplying a phone number and email, so that you can be reached at short notice. Please let the SIG contact know if your plans alter.

Members are reminded that the FNCV requests that masks be worn at all meetings and wherever social distancing is not possible.

You will be required to sign in with the Victorian Government QR app (logo above). It is simple. Just bring your phone. Assistance is available to everyone. Try to arrive a few minutes early.

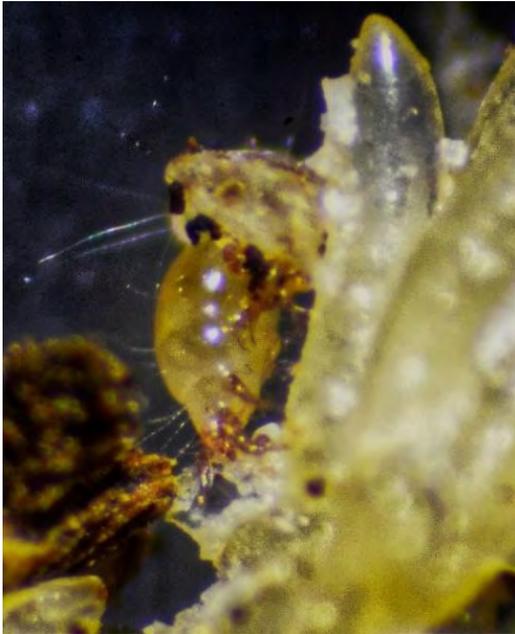
**Note: the Biodiversity Symposium advertised in the four monthly Calendar of Events for 14th and 15th of August has been cancelled.**

The policy of the FNCV is that non-members pay \$5 per excursion and \$3 per meeting, to contribute towards Club overheads. Junior non-member families, \$4 per excursion and \$2 per meeting.



(Continued from page 1)

walls of compost bins and sometimes appear in numbers on paths prior to pupation.



3. Mites eating the eggs. Photo: M Campbell

We are back in the hall for meetings, albeit under COVID-Safe guidelines. Meeting in person, as far as I am concerned, will always be more rewarding than online meetings, even under somewhat regulated conditions. As always, we will keep you informed regarding changes to the settings for meetings and excursions.

**Max Campbell**



4. Boreoides sp.. Female . Photo: John Eichler



Left  
5. Boreoides sp.  
Male.  
Photo:  
John Eichler



6 *Exaireta spinigera* larva.  
Photo: Andrew McCutcheon



7. *Exaireta spinigera*

Photo: Max Campbell

**Advertising in the  
Field Nats News**

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RATES**

Contact Wendy in the Field  
Nats Office  
[admin@fncv.org.au](mailto:admin@fncv.org.au)  
9877 9860

# Members' news, photos & observations

We always have space for member photos and natural history observations. Please share with us what you have noted in your daily life, travels or garden. Email: [fnnews@fncv.org.au](mailto:fnnews@fncv.org.au) by the first Monday in the month.

Welcome  
Welcome

**Warmest greetings to these new members who were welcomed into our club at the last Council meeting:**

Nina Dargaville-Syme, Ali Dargaville-Syme, Toby Dargaville, Anna Syme, William Molyneux, Susan Forrester, Paula Tsernjavski, Stephen Warrillow, Alice Odermatt, Diane John, Jeanette Sanderson and Marcia Begg

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Rob Hamson sent FNN this lovely image (left) of a Garden Orb Weaver spider, *Eriophora transmarina* photographed in his garden towards the end of May. Thank you Rob. Thanks also to George Paras for his fascinating tale of a False Killer Whale sighting ( see below).

**READERS: Please keep sharing your observations and photos with FNN as you did in 2020 . We will always have space!**

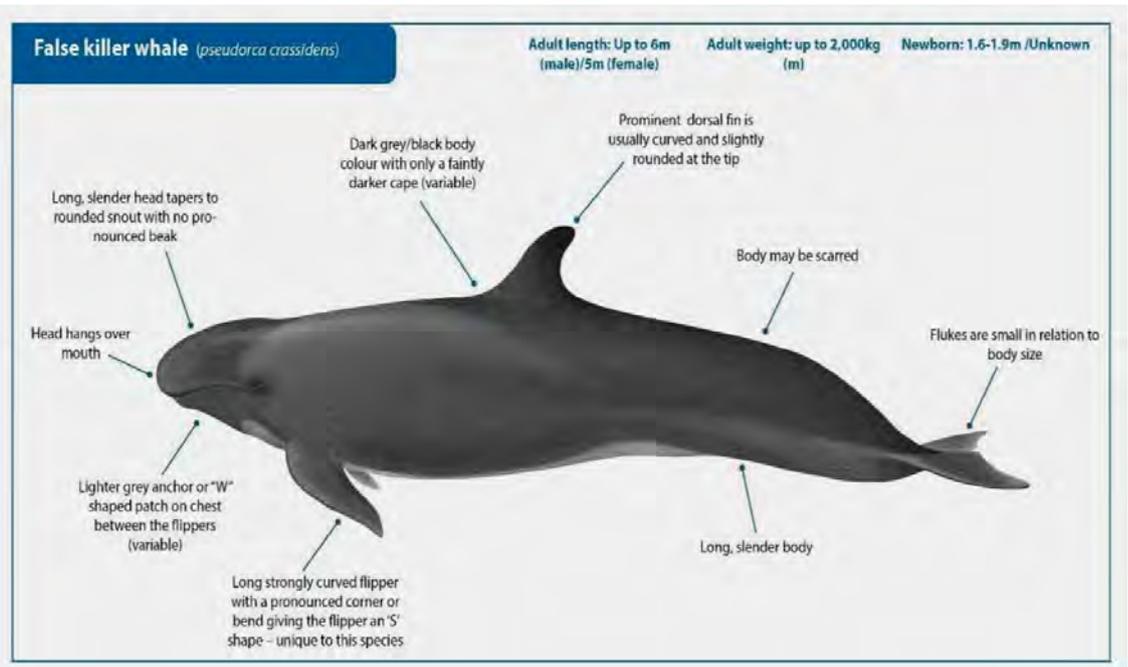
## False Killer Whale 16th May 2021 - Haycock Beach, Ben Boyd National Park

On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2021, whilst at Ben Boyd National Park, on the South Coast of NSW, I sighted a small, dark, chocolate—black coloured, blunt-headed, porpoise-like whale, along the surf breakers at Haycock Beach (Long Beach), south of Pambula.

It was seemingly chasing schools of large Australian Salmon (*Arripis trutta*), which were prevalent that day, in the surf gutter running parallel to the beach shore. Consulting various books and online resources, I came to conclude its identity as a False Killer Whale (*Pseudorca crassidens*).

Its prominent dorsal fin and overall body and head shape were distinctive:

**George Paras**



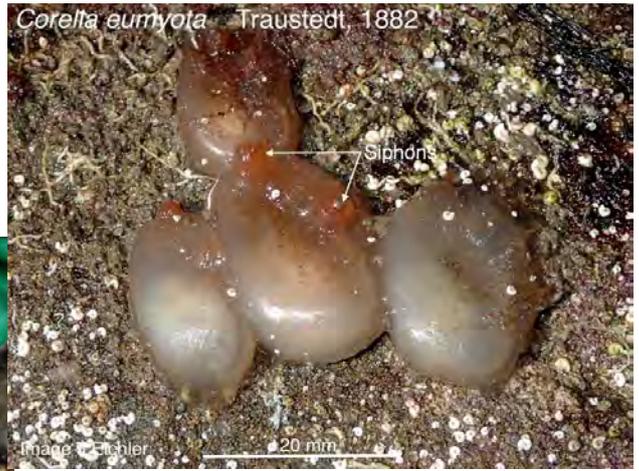
<https://wwhandbook.iwc.int/en/species/false-killer-whale>  
Paula Olson/PIFSC/NOAA ]

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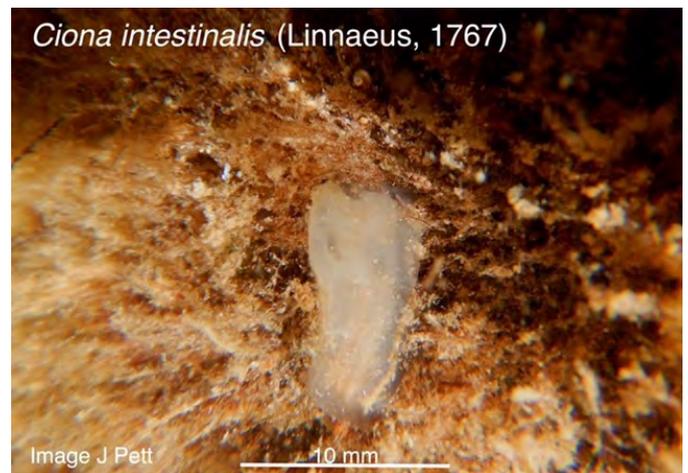
## Ascidian highlights—Marine Research Group Fieldwork

Marine Research Group's (MRG) intertidal Surveys since 2015 have shown that the most wide-spread ascidian (sea-squirt) on Victorian shores is *Corella eumyota* Traustedt, 1882. We saw it almost everywhere we went. Usually on the underside of rocks, this solitary ascidian is often transparent, allowing identification by the position of the gut and gonads. It may also be a shade of orange or deep red. *Corella eumyota* can be distinguished from other glassy-looking ascidians by the position of its two siphons (often orange-tipped), one terminal (at the upper end of the body) and the other always located towards the right of the body. Native to the southern hemisphere, it is rapidly becoming a pest in harbours of the northern hemisphere.



At Bunbury Point, Apollo Bay, we had a rare opportunity to see a transparent ascidian fully extended, and feeding through its long oral siphon. As often happens, there was more in the picture than we realized at the time – an aeolid nudibranch was passing by. As is common with ascidians, the collected specimen barely resembled the animal in its subtidal habitat. Nevertheless *Ascidia gemmata* Sluiter, 1895 can often be recognized out of the water. It too may have orange-tipped siphons, one terminal, but the other is to the left and usually points downwards. A greenish tinge to internal organs may also be observed.

Another transparent ascidian reported to us proved to be *Ciona intestinalis* (Linnaeus, 1767). The two siphons of *Ciona* species are close together at one end of the body, which is narrow and straight. It is also helpful that its neural ganglion is often visible as a white spot between the siphons. This introduced pest has been fouling jetties and moorings in the Gippsland Lakes. It was once common in Port Phillip Bay, but this specimen from Portarlington is the first we have seen in the intertidal zone since 2015.



Three sand-encrusted round ascidians, each about 10mm across, were found under a rock at Point Cook. When examined internally,



nally, the renal sac (kidney) confirmed the genus *Molgula* (Molgulidae are the only ascidians to have a kidney). We predicted *M. ficus* (a southern ascidian now being a nuisance in North America), but diagnostic features suggested *Molgula calvata* (Sluiter, 1904), a species more often recorded from the north of Australia.

At Point Addis, a lump hidden on the underside of a long-dead abalone outed itself to a skilled observer (Leon A), by squirting as he turned the shell. When it was removed from this habitat, distinctive external features emerged. Long siphons far apart, longitudinal furrows and sharp ridges on the test accurately pointed to *Pyura irregularis* (Herdman 1881).

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

Victorian naturalists familiar with ascidians called *Pyura stolonifera* may be aware that this complex now includes *Pyura praeputialis* (Heller, 1878), of the surf coasts, and *Pyura doppelgangeri* Rius and Teske, 2013, mostly confined to the muddy environment of Corner Inlet, in eastern Victoria.

In the 1990s it was established by J.E. Dalby that in Victoria, *Pyura praeputialis* consisted of two colour morphs, brown and yellow, the yellow predominating inside Port Phillip Bay. Rius and Teske (2011) then described the ‘yellow cunjevoi’ as a separate species, naming it *Pyura dalbyi*.

Specimens collected by the MRG from bay beaches at Portarlington and Martha Point correspond to the description of *P. dalbyi*. Dalby referred to *degrees* of yellowness, which is fortunate for us, as our specimens are predominantly pink. Nevertheless they are distinguishable, both in the field and after collection, by their pink-orange protruding naked smooth-lobed siphons. Unlike *P. praeputialis* which is often seen above the water level, *P. dalbyi* is found in locations which remain just underwater even at the lowest tide. *Pyura dalbyi*, then known as *Pyura stolonifera*, appears as Plate VIIIa in Part 1 of *The Australian Ascidiacea* by Patricia Kott (1985) (image by Jan Watson).



Ascidian identities were confirmed by inspection of internal anatomy, with reference to the most recent taxonomic studies. All field excursions and collections by the MRG are conducted in accordance with Permits issued by Parks Victoria and Victorian Fisheries Authority.

The last word is from John Eichler  
(See photo below: *A large flock of Corellas*)

**Carol Bathie and Janet Pett**



**Marine Research Group members at work**

Thanks to the editorial and layout team who put together FNN 321

Joan Broadberry, Wendy Gare and Sally Bewsher



## Fungi Group Reports

At our first meeting for 2021 held on 3rd May (and the first since March 2020) we were treated to two presentations, the first being about the effects of fire on fungi, (published in FNN 320). The second, (below) about the aims and activities of MYCOmmunity, including some information about the portable MinION DNA sequencer.

### MYCOmmunity: Applied Mycology and Learning Lab

*A presentation by Caine Barlow and Jordina Samar*

MYCOmmunity is a non-profit organisation involving both professional and citizen-scientists concerned with applied mycology. Activities include training, conducting workshops, providing mushroom identification, and experimenting with growing mushrooms, mycoremediation and mycomaterials.

MYCOmmunity runs a **BioQuisitive Lab**, where activities include the use of microscopes, equipment for growing fungal cultures, and the provision of resources for ecological surveys and DNA sequencing.

#### Wild Fungi DNA project

Very little is known about Australian native fungi. Only around 20% of our macro-fungi have been named/described. Matters being investigated include generation length, fruiting frequency, and fruiting triggers. Most data is gathered by citizen-scientists for iNaturalist, Atlas of Living Australia and Fungimap.

DNA technology is becoming cheap and accessible. Two methods of investigation are used, namely colour change tests for presence of particular fungi in soil, and the MinION portable DNA Sequencer.

#### Colour Change Tests

Colour change tests show the presence or absence of target fungi using primers-specific tests. The tests are easy to perform and can be done in the field. It takes about half an hour to see the results, and the cost is approximately \$5 per test.

#### MinION Portable DNA Sequencer

This device uses Nanopore technology, and has the capability to sequence up to 1000 specimens per run, at a cost of \$1500. It can be used in the field and is affordable to community groups. However, very high-powered computing is required to process the data and analysis of the data needs to be done by someone with a scientific background.

#### Aims of MYCOmmunity

MYCOmmunity hopes its activities will result in (1) better understanding fungi, including their roles in the ecosystem, distribution, relationships with other species, the lifecycles of rare fungi, and how fungi respond to disturbance; (2) contribution of data to the Atlas of Living Australia; and (3) improving land management in relation to fungi as well as preserving habitats of endangered fungi.

MYCOmmunity hopes to build collaboration with individuals, community and citizen-science organisations, land managers and scientists. Taking an active part in the science increases community interest in conservation.

Thank you, Caine and Jordina, for presenting this interesting information about MYCOmmunity. It was good to hear from another group that shares our thirst for knowledge about fungi.

Virgil Hubregtse



#### CONGRATULATIONS

Virgil and Jurrie have a *Pluteus* species of fungus named after them:  
*Pluteus hubregtseorum*! More details soon.



## Fungi Group Foray Ada Tree, Yarra State Forest 2nd May 2021



It's a magical place under the *Nothofagus* rainforests coursing along the gullies in the hills east of Melbourne, where the almost unreal lyrebird mimicry echoes and the colourful mushrooms can flourish. The first foray of the season is usually to one such place, as the higher retained moisture increases the likelihood of finding fungi even after drier autumns.

With fine, calm weather 22 participants ventured out under the thick rain-

forest canopy to lose sight of the sun in the darker, sheltered realm of the fungi. We recorded a bit over 70 identifiable fungi species, about the same as our previous foray there on April 28, 2019. My general feeling however was that although a decent variety was around, the amount of individuals was down a bit, resulting in somewhat smaller groups. Perhaps this was due to a slightly drier than average April (despite the three months to the end of April having about average rainfall).

The prime example of reduced number was *Beenakia dacostae*, a species that was particularly looked for on this trip. It was hoped to make a collection for the Herbarium but even the usually better of the two colonies along the track held only one sporangium. This was insufficient for a collection and the hoped for DNA analysis would also be delayed. We do not yet have the genetic information for this species (or many others described from Australia). In New Zealand, where a lot more work is done, they are waiting for us to test ours (from near the Type locality) so they can place whatever species they have tested over there.

In wet forests, usually with soft treefern (*Dicksonia Antarctica*), such as in this area, we occasionally find small brown-stalked beige clubs about 1–2 cm tall. These can grow in soil or on the tree-fern trunks and are labeled "*Mitrula* sp." in Bruce Fuhrer's original 2005 A Field Guide to Australian Fungi. This is another one of those distinctive local species that has been known about for several decades but, as is typical for Australian mycology, I would be very surprised if any taxonomic progress will be made during most of our lifetimes. Through online feedback from posting on the international iNaturalist platform it has been suggested that these are more likely a *Pseudomitula* sp.

It was only after starting to return to the car park for lunch that the group I was with found a stunning Yellowleg Bonnet (*Mycena epipterygia* group) colony growing up a fallen branch right beside the track. It is interesting how something like this wasn't observed even though we walked right past it. There is always something being missed but the more eyes there are the more chances of finding things so, with our many eyes, hopefully we found everything there was to be seen.

For more photos of what we found check out the iNaturalist project:

<https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/projects/fncv-2021-ada-tree>



*Beenakia dacostae*

Photo: Reiner Richter



*Pseudomitula* sp.

Photo: Reiner Richter



Left:  
*Cantharellus concinnus*

Right: *Mycena epipterygia*

Photos: R. Richter



Reiner Richter



**Fungi Group Foray Masons Falls Area, Kinglake National Park**  
*16th May 2021*

There was talk of rain in the forecast, but the day turned out to be beautiful, luckily for the large turnout for the foray. Rain in the previous week meant that there was a huge number of fungi to be found. The plan was to walk the track to Masons Falls in the morning and the Lyre-bird Loop track in the afternoon.

However before we were even out of the carpark there were already a whole range of fungi noted and identified including various *Cortinarius* and coral species. An early sighting of several *Psathyrella asperopora* was particularly interesting, initially identified by Richard Hartland.

Once out of the carpark and onto the trails we could see that the established Sclerophyll forest had recovered well from the Kinglake bush fires in February 2009 though there were still burn marks on the trees and some burnt logs. Under the logs one could occasionally find *Pseudomerulius curtisii*.

One could see that the weather had been wet. Examples of *Pseudohydnum gelatinosum* were on many of the eucalypt trees and also on very many of the logs. *Mycena* were plentiful as well, in particular the always attractive *Mycena interrupta* (figure 1) and *Mycena kuurkacea*.

A few of the insect-replacing fungi were found. These included *Cordyceps hawkesii*, *Drechmeria* (formerly *Cordyceps*) *gunnii* and *Beauveria bassiana*.

Towards the end of the morning walk a pored fungus growing on the side of a living tree that was seen. It was not one I had seen before. Sapphire has identified this as *Polyporus gayanus*. (figure 2)

Not many of the foray members made it as far as the falls. The photo below is of cascades part way to the falls themselves.

The afternoon walk around the circuit walk was less popular as many of the members had signed out but there were still lots of fungi to be seen including a large variety of corals that had not been spotted in the morning.

For more photos of what were found check out the iNaturalist project:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/fncv2021-mason-s-falls?tab=observations>



Figure 1: *Mycena interrupta* Photo: Torbjorn von Strokirch



Figure 2: *Polyporus gayanus* Photo: Torbjorn von Strokirch

**Torbjorn von Strokirch**



Left: Cascades

Right: Figure 3  
*Polyporus gayanus*

Photos: Torbjorn Von Strokirch





## Fungi Group Foray 20 June 2021 Mortimer Reserve, Bunyip State Park

Due to a recent COVID lockdown, this foray was postponed for three weeks, replacing the scheduled Mt Worth foray, which was cancelled due to closure of that park after the previous week's storm damage! The delay was fortuitous, enabling an enthusiastic group of 22 people to gather at Mortimer Picnic Ground on Sunday 20 June, under the guidance of the group's new coordinator, Melvin Xu.

This area of Bunyip State Park is mostly Riparian Forest with some Shrubby Foothill Forest. *Banksia spinulosa* and tree-ferns, including *Dicksonia antarctica*, can be found along with many species of eucalypt. The main foray route is the Mortimer Nature Trail circuit, which starts at the camping site and follows William Wallace Creek before crossing Gembrook–Tonimbuk Road and eventually Diamond Creek to its south. In the afternoon, many of us also took the Ferres Track heading north-east out of Mortimer Picnic Ground before looping back via Triangle Road.

For some of the party, this was their first fungi foray; others had been visiting the area for several decades and knew the range of species found on previous occasions. A new rare gem, discovered by Reiner Richter, was a small, toothed *Auriscalpium* growing on a eucalypt to the south of the road. Reiner has also found *Auriscalpium* in nearby Kurth Kiln Regional Park. This fungus is named *Auriscalpium 'Blackwood'* after the species' first discovery in the Blackwood area.

Among the regularly sighted basidiomycete 'mushrooms' were: the parasitic Australian Honey Fungus *Armillaria luteobubalina*, apricot-coloured Australian Chanterelle *Cantherellus concinnus*, green-capped *Cortinarius austrovenetus* and Elegant Blue Webcap *C. rotundisporus*, *Collybia eucalyptorum*, *Crepidotus* spp., *Entoloma readiae*, Moss Bells *Galerina hypnorum* and *G. patagonica*, three species of Rustgills *Gymnopilus* spp., Milky Bonnet *Hemimycena lactea*, and toothed Hedgehog Mushrooms *Hydnum* aff. *repandum*, some with the rarer browner pileus. There were many tiny, hard to identify white *Mycena* (Bonnets) as well as more recognisable Tiny Blue Lights *Mycena lazulina*, *M. cystidiosa* (with tall stipes), *M. kuurkacea* (which exudes red liquid when the stem is broken), *M. nargan*, *M. subgalericulata* and *M. subvulgaris*. This is also a good site to find the beautiful Velvet Parachute *Marasmius elegans*, with its orange pileus and two-tone stipe, red and white *Russula persanguinea* and dark pink-stemmed *R. lenkunya* (thought to be part of the *R. clellandii* complex), and three species of *Panellus*. We saw Delicate Yellow Coral *Ramariopsis crocea*, commonly found here on tree-fern trunks, while *Lycoperdon* spp. puffballs and leathery Curtain Crusts *Stereum illudens* and *S. versicolor* were abundant on the Nature Trail. A few familiar specimens of *Podoscypa petalodes* were found on Triangle Road. Also familiar in this area, we recorded polypore brackets *Ganoderma australe*, *Rhodofomitopsis lilacinogilva* (Continued p 11)

(cont. from p10) and *Trametes versicolor*, Toothed Jelly *Pseudohydnum gelatinosum* and White Brain fungus *Tremella fusiformis*. Inevitably, the exotic 'weed' fungus Orange Ping Pong Bats *Favolaschia calocera* was present too.



*Auriscalpium* 'Blackwood' Photo: V Hubregtse



*Cortinarius austrovenetus*

Photo: V Hubregtse



Melvin Xu's photo of his *Hydnum* aff. *repandum* herbarium specimens.



Fungi group coordinator Melvin Xu demonstrating at lunchtime

Recurrantly recorded ascomycetes, found again on this survey, included: Purple Jelly Disc *Ascocoryne sarcoides*, Large Banksia Disc *Banksiamyces macrocarpus* growing on a *B. spinulosa* cone, blue-green discs *Chlorociboria aeruginascens* complex, *Hispidula dicksoniae* (small tufted discs growing on the dead rachises of Soft Tree Fern *Dicksonia antarctica*), *Hymenoscyphus* discs (sp. 'olive cream with black rhizomorphs') forming a carpet in the wet twig and leaf litter, *Lachnum virgineum* (small white goblet-shaped fungi), black discs *Lanzia lanaripes*, Yellow Earth Buttons *Phaeohelotium baileyianum* (growing in soil), orange discs with dark eyelash-like hairs in the *Scutellinia scutellata* complex, and spiky *Xylaria fliformis*.

Many of the fungi are difficult to identify to species level; for example, Virgil and Jurrie Hubregtse took home several specimens for microscopic analysis, but were unable to confidently identify a *Pluteus* with faint dark edges to its lamellae and a fibrillose pileus, which has some affinity to *P. atomarginatus*. Some tiny hairy white 'Mycena' with only five or six fold-like lamellae proved to be microscopically different from other tiny *Mycena* species Virgil has examined. Melvin Xu has also taken a Yellow Club *Clavulinopsis amoena* for DNA analysis.

The photos submitted to iNaturalist included a lovely cluster of white fungi with grey-lilac dotted pilei, identified variously as *Lepiota*, *Lepiota haemorrhagica* and *Leucoagaricus* genus. Bruce Fuhrer recorded a similar specimen as genus *Lepiota* in his *Field Guide to Australian Fungi* (#160), but I have been assured that similar specimens on iNaturalist have been expertly identified as *Leucoagaricus*. Also to be resolved, Reiner and Paul George both took photos of a small attractive fungus with a golden fibrillose pileus, short fibrillose stipe and saw-toothed lamellae, variously labeled as *Pleuroflammula praestans* and genus *Flammulaster*.

John Eichler tentatively identified a pink-brown coral fungus as *Ramaria fennica fumigata*, but welcomes further ideas on the subject. For John, who has clocked-up over 40 years as a FNCV member, the survey's stand-out species were: a beautiful orange-capped *Lactifluus clarkeae* (formerly *Lactarius clarkeae*); the tiny and fairly common, but intriguingly tufted *Hispidula dicksoniae* discs; and a cluster of oyster mushroom-like *Grifola colensoi*, unfortunately past its best, but an uncommon find.

Often the hardest part of fungi photography is finding a great specimen. Unusually, there were fewer *Amanitas* on this occasion, although Paul George found a great Umber Amanita *A. umbrinella*, recognised by its grey-brown pileus and prominent, striated annulus. There were also some lovely glutinous-capped purple-brown *Cortinarius submagellanicus* and a superb cluster of spiky *Psathyrella echinata* along Triangle Road.

My own records for this reserve date back to 2016. Drawing on these, it would appear that 'new' species (or species not seen for a number of years) include: *Clavulinopsis (Clavaria) amoena*, *Clitocybe semioculta*, *Grifola colensoi*, *Hygrocybe rodwayi*, *Hymenotorrendiella clelandii*, *Hypoxyylon howeanum* and *H. rubiginosum*, *Lactifluus clarkeae*, Jellybaby *Leotia lubrica*, *Marasmiellus candidus*, *Mycena subvulgaris*, *Peziza varia*, *Phellodon niger*, *Phleogena faginea*, *Picipes melanopus*, *Pleurotus purpureo-olivaceus*, *Pseudomerulius curtisii*, *Rimbachia bryophila*, *Sphaerobolus stellatus*, *Stropharia formosa*, *Tetrapyrgos olivaceonigra*, and *Trichoderma nothescens*.

(continued p12)



Tiny unknown 'Mycena' Photo: V Hubregtse



*Leucoagaricus* or *Lepiota*? Photo: S Forster



Maybe *Pleuroflammula praestans* or genus *Flammulaster*?

Photos: R Richter

(Continued from p 11)

Sandwiched between the forays, Melvin Xu’s lunchtime demonstrations were a clear highlight of the day. Firstly, Melvin showed the group how to prepare a herbarium specimen using a *Hydnum* found that morning. He began by taking photos of it on a white paper ground, using a ruler for scale and a tag with the initials of the finder and a number. Melvin uploads his photos to iNaturalist Australia website where GPS details will also be stored. He said that specimens should be preserved by drying (a food dehydrator or tubes with dessication crystals are useful) and dried fungi can even be frozen. Secondly, he showed us how to prepare a small sample for DNA analysis by cutting a clean part from under the pileus surface. He placed this in a sealed tube containing silica dessication beads. Lastly, he brought out plastic petri dishes half-full



*Cortinarius submagellanicus*. Photo: P George.



*Psathyrella echinata*. Photo: S Forster

of an agar gel mixed with 1% hydrogen peroxide to sterilize bacteria on fungal specimens. He explained these could be used as teaching aids in the field because collected sporophores can grow mycelium in the gel and, once established, can later be transferred to a clean agar mix.

Many of the fungi mentioned in this report are photo-documented online, along with others from the foray, at the iNaturalist Australia FNCV project site:

[https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/observations?place\\_id=any&project\\_id=fncv-2021-mortimer\\_foray&verifiable=any](https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/observations?place_id=any&project_id=fncv-2021-mortimer_foray&verifiable=any)

Thank you to Melvin Xu, Virgil Hubregtse and John Eichler for their help in preparing this report.

**Sue Forster**



*Hispidula dicksoniae* Photo: J Eichler

**A REMINDER**

The requirement for a **working with children check commenced on July 1st 2021**. It will affect many FNCV SIG groups who volunteer with Parks Victoria. Some of us also work in Parks Vic areas with other organisations such as friends groups.

**Editor:** I am happy to say I was able to work through the process with the aid of the instructions outlined in FNN 320 p8. However, don't give up help is available. Contact the FNCV office.

**Editor**





## Fauna Survey Group

### Survey: Rushworth Forest, 15<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> May

On the weekend of 15-16<sup>th</sup> May, five Fauna Survey Group (FSG) members checked 87 nestboxes in the state forest section of Rushworth Forest. We camped at our favourite site, Three Jim's Dam. The Ironbarks were in full flower, attracting nectar feeders such as Musk Lorikeets and various honeyeaters, and a beekeeper had set up many hives nearby. The weather was cold and clear, but we escaped the rain, sleet and hail which fell in Melbourne. Saturday night was dark and, with no moon, provided a spectacular view of a starry sky.

Twenty-six Krefft's (Sugar) Gliders (*Petaurus notatus*) and two Brush-tailed Phascogales were recorded in the nestboxes. Sightings near the campsite were of an Eastern Stone Gecko, a Boulenger's Skink, a Garden Skink, some Bibron's Toadlets and, at night, an Owllet Nightjar and a Common Brushtail Possum (*Trichosurus vulpecula*).

A range of birds were also observed as we moved around to different sites. These included several Scarlet Robins, a Wedge-tailed Eagle, flocks of cheerful Choughs, Grey Shrike-thrushes, Brown Treecreepers, Grey Currawongs and numerous Noisy Friarbirds.

Sally Bewsher and Ray Gibson



Sugar Gliders in nest box.

Photo: Asha Billing

The capture and handling of all animals on FNCV field trips is done strictly in accordance with the Club's research permits.



Eastern Stone Gecko

Photo: Asha Billing



Bibron's Toadlet

Photo: Asha Billing

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## SIG reports given at the FNCV Council Meeting June 28th 2021

### Fauna Survey Group

**Meeting, 1st June 2021** This was another zoom webcast attended by 20 participants. The speaker for the night was Bhagya Herath, PhD candidate at La Trobe University on 'Complexity of visual and vocal communication in the Eastern Dwarf Tree Frog (*Litoria fallax*) among genetic, ecological and social constraints.

Eastern Dwarf Tree Frog is one of a complex of four species in the *Litoria bicolor* group in Eastern Australia. *Litoria fallax* reached Victoria as a 'banana box migrant' and has managed to survive in the cooler climate. *L. fallax* has three advertisement calls which come in six different call sequences, and these calls can be used in duets and choruses, with further variation. As well as calling, signalling behaviour with the limbs, throat inflation, and colour displaying may be used. At the meeting we were delighted to welcome Dr Murray Littlejohn, a pioneer of recording frogs and analysing their calls going back as far as the 1950s.



**R. Gibson & David De Angelis**

### Botany Group: on Zoom

Twenty-five people enjoyed Dr Greg Moore's presentation. Since his career at Burnley Horticultural College, then Melbourne University, Greg now speaks often to community groups, is heard on the radio and writes for The Conversation. To mitigate the effects of climate change, Greg argued extensively and passionately for urban tree cover to increase.

**Ken Griffiths**

**Day Group:** Presentation of Grey-headed Flying Foxes cancelled due to Covid restrictions.

**Joan Broadberry**

**Fungi Group:** Meeting cancelled due to Covid restrictions.

### Terrestrial Invertebrates Group:

Max Campbell organised a Zoom meeting on fungi and insects.

### Marine Research Group:

Meeting combined with TIG.

### Geology Group:

The Geology group met at the FNCV Hall with twenty-five people being present. First, Ken Griffiths introduced the excursion planned for July 25th, showing how new data sources are improving our understanding of both the Newer Volcanic Province and the Melbourne Zone of old and very deep sediment.

Eve Kolar took us for an 'armchair tourist' trip with her many photos and comments about northern Australia. The Kakadu wetlands and escarpments, the Kimberley with its ancient flat, uplifted sandstone geology, waterfalls and flooded harbours, Montague Sound basalt columns, limestone and cliff caves were just some of the highlights.

**Ken Griffiths**

**Juniors:** See FNN 322

### Treasures of the Natural World exhibition at Melbourne Museum—from the 25th of June 2021 - Thanks to Juniors news, June 2021 issue

*Some of the world's biggest, rarest, oldest and most fascinating treasures are landing at Melbourne Museum, all the way from London, in June. Journey through the natural world and marvel at the objects that changed the course of scientific history. From the unique or extremely rare, to the mysterious and astonishing, get up close and personal with over 200 artefacts whose colourful stories unlock the mysteries of life. With treasures such as Charles Darwin's personal collection that inspired his theory of evolution, and a 200 million-year-old Ichthyosaurus fossil found by English fossil collector Mary Anning when she was just 11 years old, and the biggest butterfly in the world, you'll be inspired to see the world—our biggest treasure—in a completely different light.*

