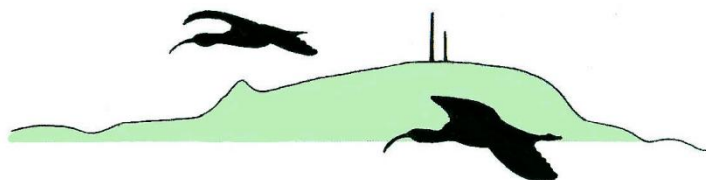


ORANGE FIELD NATURALIST AND CONSERVATION SOCIETY Inc



NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2017

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 12th October, 7.30pm

SPEAKER: Ian Roth

**TOPIC: Saving the Sumatran Rhino
and the Bellinger River Snapping Turtle**

**VENUE: Orange Community
Information and Services Centre.
(Next to Senior Citizens Centre.
Enter from Woolworths carpark.).**

**Committee Meeting at 6.30pm
All members are welcome**

EXCURSION

Sunday, 15th October

To be decided at the meeting

Visit the OFNCS website at

<http://www.orangefieldnats.com/>

Next Meeting

OFNCS member **Ian Roth** is also a member of the Board of Taronga Zoo and Chair of their Wildlife Committee. He will be telling us about the efforts by Taronga Zoo to help save the Sumatran Rhino and the Bellinger River Snapping Turtle.

Next Excursion

Our originally planned excursion to Peel Reserve is no longer possible so we will decide at the committee meeting on Thursday night where we will on the following Sunday.

Last Meeting

Summary will be in the next newsletter

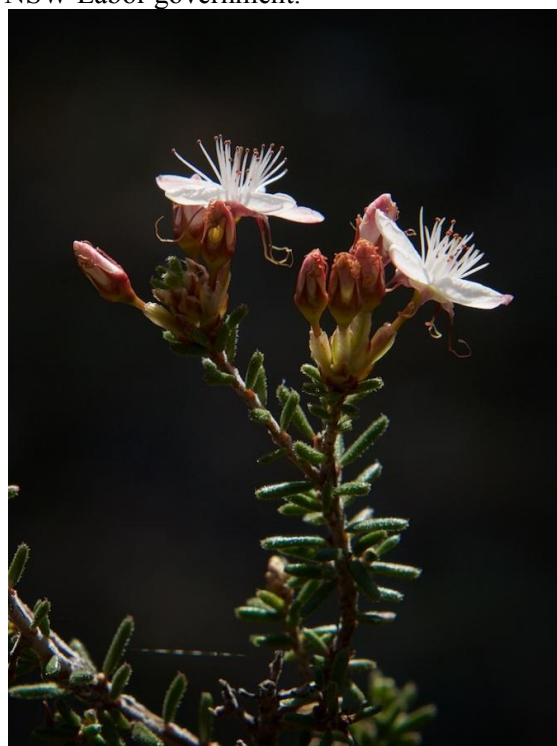
Last excursion

Report by Rosemary Stapleton

Killonbutta Nature Reserve, 17 September

Warm still weather, the bush, Steve Woodhall and other knowledgeable company ... what more could you have for an enjoyable excursion?

Eleven young and young at heart pooled cars and headed through Molong to Killonbutta Nature Reserve. As Steve explained, its official name is South Western Woodlands Nature Reserve - Killonbutta Precinct. It is one of a group of State Forests that were handed to National Parks and Wildlife to manage in the last days of the last NSW Labor government.



Fringe myrtle, *Calytrix tetragona*, in Killonbutta
[photo: Helmut Berndt]

Orchids and flowering shrubs were on the agenda for many so it was eyes to the ground. A quick stop along the 'main' road through the reserve resulted in the first of many tiny *Caladenia* orchids. The next stop, on the northern side of this road, was on the central trail among more open forest with a few understorey shrubs. We found a few straggly plants of *Grevillea ramosissima*, confirming its presence for Dick. In amongst the scattered *Caladenias* were a few clusters of Greenhood leaves with spent seed heads. There were not many birds although a pair of Scarlet Robins was spotted. We all wondered what had been digging the holes that looked too big for Echidnas. In places the Stringy Bark thinned

into an area dominated by *Calytrix tetragona* with just an occasional flower open. Was this change due to a change in soil conditions?



Grevillea floribunda in Killonbutta NR
[photo: Helmut Berndt]

Heading east along this track we all managed the "Everest-like" drainage humps (Jane's term) and stopped where there were large plants of *Grevillea floribunda* and scattered wattles and orchids in the forest. Steve spoke to us about the history of the reserve and the challenges of developing a fire management plan. As the reserve is thick *Callitris* with no cleared areas to act as fire breaks it would be difficult to do a control burn and even harder to control a bush fire. People went in search of orchids, plants, birds and insects with the best birds seen being a pair of Olive-backed Orioles. Just by chance there was a good log for us all to sit on for our lunch.

Our last stop was on the north western edge of the park in an area of granite boulders. The vegetation was very different and more plants and birds were added to the park's list. Several Brown Treecreepers and Eastern Yellow Robins were spotted, two *Diuris* orchids in flower as well as a few goats heading into the distance. However the most interesting thing was evidence of a water race spotted by geologist Peter Toedter. He wondered why it had been constructed to either take water that flowed off the granite boulders away or to take it to the boulders perhaps for mining.

The excursion and reconnoitring beforehand was not only enjoyable but

worthwhile. It gathered new flora and fauna data on the reserve for the National Parks and Wildlife Service. At least 12 plant and 9 orchid species, including *Pheladenia deformis* (see Creature of the Month), three reptiles and two mammals were added to their lists. Several people even said they would be heading back in the next few weeks to explore different parts of the reserve. Who knows what they will find?



Peter Toedter inspects the water race
[photo: Rosemary Stapleton]

Killonbutta bird list from Cilla

Laughing Kookaburra	2
White-throated Treecreeper	4
Brown Treecreeper	1
Superb Fairy-wren	5
Spotted Pardalote	1
Noisy Friarbird	1
Yellow-faced Honeyeater	3
Willie Wagtail	1
Grey Fantail	3
Rufous Whistler	1
White-plumed Honeyeater	1
Grey Shrike-thrush	1
Scarlet Robin	2
Olive-backed Oriole	2
White-winged Chough	4
Eastern Yellow Robin	1
Australian Raven	2
Pied Butcherbird	1
Pied Currawong	2
Australian Magpie	1
Magpie-lark	3

We also saw unidentified thornbills (prob. Buff-rumped), had 2 unidentified calls and saw

2 hares, 3 goats and 2 bearded dragons but not a skippy in sight.

Members' Notes

from Jenny Kenna

We have had no rain for 3 months and last night we received 2.5mils, hooray!

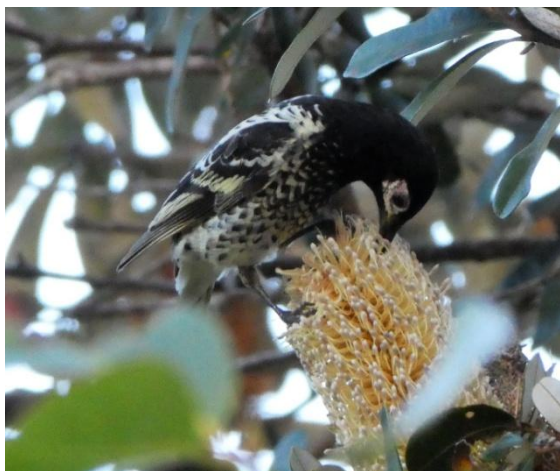
I took a photo of this very attractive fly that was attracted to the wet cement. Do you know what it is please?



[from the editor: The fly is *Amenia imperialis*, a blowfly which parasitises snails. It is native to the eastern coastal areas of mainland Australia from far north Queensland to southern Victoria. This specimen is a female as indicated by the distance between the eyes]

Also from Jenny Kenna

Thought you would like to see a photo of a visitor that stayed around for about a fortnight. Also we have a Powerful Owl in the Coffs botanic gardens, they nest there every year.



Jenny's Regent Honeyeater

Birth announcement

Cilla is proud to announce the hatching on 1st October of the first Peregrine falcon chick for this year in the Falcon Cam project in the CSU water tower. Mother and chick are both doing well.

You can monitor their progress at <http://www.csu.edu.au/special/falconcam/Streams/camera-one.htm>



Falcon chick gets its first feed

Creature of the Month

Blue Fairy

Pheladenia deformis

Text by Jenny and Dick Medd

Photo by Rosemary Stapleton



Pheladenia deformis, commonly known as a Blue Fairy or Bluebeard, was separated out of the *Caladenia* genus by the orchid gurus early this century and is the only species in its genus. It is endemic to Australia, occurring right across the south, from Victoria through South Australia to Western Australia as well as

Tasmania and Kangaroo Island. However, it is less common in NSW and it is uncommon, rare even, in our region. Although records exist for Conimbla NP, Goobang NP and Calula Range, sightings were neither recent nor abundant. So it generated some interest when Rosemary Stapleton spotted a few plants in Killonbutta NR last month, despite the dry season. Could this be a relocation of the Molong site recorded in 1916 by the renowned orchidologist, Rev. Rupp – a tantalising prospect?

Somewhat similar to the common *Cyanicula caerulea*, also confusingly called Blue Fairy, it is easily recognised by vivid dark blue flowers and a labellum covered with dense blue to whitish calli. Although flower colour may vary, pink or white forms are rare; flowering period is usually from May to September; habitat is commonly in well-drained areas of dry open *Callitris* woodlands or heathlands.

NOTICES

1. Subscriptions.

Payment of Annual Subscriptions is due following the Annual General Meeting in February. Please send your cheque or money order made out to "OFNCS" to the Hon. Treasurer, Dr Dick Medd, OFNCS, PO Box 369 Orange NSW 2800.

Subscription rates:

Single member – \$25

Each additional family member – \$5

Concession rate (emailed newsletters) – \$12.50

Concession rate (printed newsletters) – \$25

Note: concession rate is for *bona fide* pensioners and students only



OFNCS members at Killonbutta NR [photo:Helmut Berndt]

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