



Secretary: Sue Guinness, PO Box 491, Aireys Inlet, Victoria 3231 |  
 Mob: 0407 070 641 Email: sjguinness@gmail.com



**FROM THE  
 PRESIDENT**  
**Patrick  
 Flanagan**

### JAPAN FOREST HAS OTWAY SIMILARITY

Greetings from the Kii Peninsula in Japan, south of Osaka and Kyoto, where Janet and I have just completed part of the Kumano Kodo pilgrim trail. Walking along the 100km track, I was struck by the similarity of climate, landform and human land use to the Otways. Although much larger, the Kii Peninsula is also mountainous (over 1000m). It protrudes into the Pacific Ocean which makes it a rain attractor so has many, relatively short, fast-flowing waterways that flow to the sea. It is covered by forest, which the Wakayama Prefecture estimates covers 77% of the peninsula. However, 60% of that is open to commercial logging.

Much of the forest, particularly in the south, is not old-growth but was cleared immediately after WW2 for timber to rebuild the mostly wooden-houses in the cities and towns that were destroyed in allied bombing. Drawing again on information provided by Wakayama Prefecture, the forest clearing and replanting was used like a make-work scheme to provide money for planting trees on farmland that had been cleared. Evergreen Japanese cedar and cypress were preferred because they were faster growing than deciduous species.

On the trail we travelled for kilometres through these plantations, mostly in the southern section of the walk, including in old cultivated fields and rice paddies. These trees were younger and smaller than in those areas that were remnant old-growth forest as well as being monocultural with little evidence of biodiversity. We did see evidence of logging in some of the villages and towns on the trail.

The surprise for me was the absence of biodiversity and the eerie quietness of the forest, with the occasional tweet of a cryptic woodland bird. We saw, and heard, many Black Kites *Milvus migrans* soaring over the river valleys, the same species we're used to seeing in the dry outback of Oz. Of monkeys, wild boar and bear, we saw not a trace (except warning signs about the latter and ground scrapings of the former) - although we think we saw a family of raccoon dogs by one of the rivers. We saw few wildflowers but perhaps it was the wrong time of the year. Being autumn, fungi were many and varied. Reptiles were more evident with sightings of a local, non-poisonous snake and a very attractive toad, but of lizards we saw none. **From your peripatetic pressie, Patrick Flanagan (right), striding along the trail.**



### THE STORY OF *Caladenia maritima* ANGAHOOK FINGERS – Margaret MacDonald



Who knows how long this attractive white finger orchid had been flowering unnoticed in the Anglesea heathy woodlands before I discovered a large population of the orchids in 1998 scattered between trees and low-growing shrubs. I was blown away by what I saw. The land had been privately owned with no public access, until it was added to the Angahook-Lorne State Park in 1995.

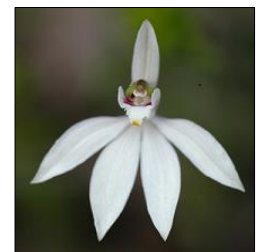
Realising that this was a different orchid to anything we had previously seen, Everett Foster and I contacted orchidologist David Jones in Canberra and sent specimens for identification. David subsequently visited the site and then named and formally described the species as *Caladenia maritima* in 'The Orcadian' (Journal of the Australasian Orchid Society) in September 1999.

Known from only this site, this is a very rare species and is regarded as critically endangered. It was added as a threatened species under the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act in

2013. *Caladenia maritima* is similar to *Caladenia catenata* White Fingers that also grows in the Anglesea district and it is often confused with this species. However, there are subtle differences: the flowers of the Angahook Fingers are usually smaller, the sepals and petals are broader and more widely spread, and it has maroon shading on the labellum.

The Friends have taken a keen interest in this particular orchid over the years and undertaken population surveys since 2001 when we recorded 245 flowering orchids. *Margaret's story continues on page 7.*

*Top left: Margaret MacDonald and Alison Watson at the 2019 survey and left: Neil Anderton, Victorian Herbarium, cross-pollinating orchids.*



*Above: Caladenia maritima and a hybrid orchid below.*





## ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDING



Above – Despite some chilly weather, happy weeders supported by Parks Vic staff at the well-attended environmental weeding session near the Anglesea River were very pleased with the results of their activities.

### SPRING WEEDING SUCCESS

Our spring weeding sessions were really well attended and we managed to accomplish a great amount on the Anglesea River Site where the Friends carried out major weed control in 2011-2013.

The old ‘faithfuls’ were there, including Coast/Sallow Wattle, Myrtle-leaf Milkwort and Boneseed. However, we were introduced to an environmental weed new for us that had invaded a large area since we were last there - *Melaleuca decussata* Cross-leaf Honey-myrtle or Totem Poles. It is a densely branched shrub growing to a height and width of 3 metres. The leaves are arranged in alternating pairs at right angles to the ones above and below so that the leaves are in 4 rows along the stems (decussate). It belongs in South Australia and some western areas of Victoria. It has naturalised in many places but we don’t want it in Anglesea. It has small purple-mauve bottle-brush type flowers.

During our spring sessions we were greatly helped by Parks Vic staff who provided chain saws and energy to cut down extensive areas of large Coast/Sallow Wattle. **Margaret MacDonald**



### COMING EVENTS



**End of Year BBQ**  
**Saturday December 14 2019**  
10.00 am – 2.00 pm

Combined activity with **ANGAIR & Parks Vic**.  
*Meet at Moggs Creek Picnic Ground*  
Contact: Kaye 0408 551 667

Enjoy a guided walk around the Moggs Creek circuit track to see the wealth of flora and listen to the calls of the birds. Or just join us for lunch at 12.00. Meat, sauce and bread provided. BYO salads, sweets, drinks, plates, glasses, cutlery and chair.



**BBQ and Spotlight Walk**  
**Friday January 3 2020**  
BBQ 7.30 pm. Walk 8.30pm

Meet Moggs Creek Picnic Ground  
Contact Margaret: 0412 652 419  
BYO everything for your BBQ.  
Bring mozzie repellent and torch.



**Friends of Eastern Otways**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**Sunday February 9 2020 at 2pm**

CFA meeting room Anglesea  
Contact: Sue 0407 070 641  
Join us to hear a review of the year’s activities and learn of our plans for 2020, plus an exciting and informative guest speaker. Followed by afternoon tea.

### SUMMER ENVIRONMENTAL WEEDING Powerline/Magpie Track

Tuesday December 10 and February 11. Meet near the cement works on Camp Road Anglesea at 9.30am. This is a joint program with Angair. Contact Margaret 0412 652 419.



Above and below: Last year’s popular BBQ in December and the well-attended AGM held in February.





## FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER



Above: The Friends display at the Angair Show caught the eye of kids and adults alike, with the competitions of special interest.



### DISPLAY SUCCESS AT ANGAIR – SEPTEMBER 21-22

Every year the Friends commit to providing a new interpretation of some aspect of our work within the park for people's interest and knowledge as a presentation for the Angair Wildflower Show. This year was no exception when yet another very successful display was presented. We highlighted the coastline and the dunes where we know the bandicoots reside and special plants support the dune system.

A couple of competitions for visitors and children associated with the main static display and video were again very popular. Members always rally around to help and engage with visitors.



The Hooded Plover story was a special feature which Margaret put together featuring our Moggs Creek 'Hoodie' family. Patrick created a well-received and thoroughly enjoyable video of animal sightings from our camera surveys over the past year, with a competition encouraging children to identify the creatures they could see in the footage. We appreciate the help of Margaret's niece Margie each year setting up her laptop and screen and ensuring the technical process is running successfully. Preparing and planning for our presentation at the show takes many weeks of enjoyable research and activity. Hence a big thank you to all the team for this show and a callout to anyone who would like to help for next year's show. **Alison Watson.**

### MAMMAL SURVEYS

### LOOK WHO WE'VE 'CAPTURED' IN THE VALLEY

The Friends of the Eastern Otways survey of small mammals in the Anglesea River Valley is continuing. Cameras were put out late August in an area where our Parks Victoria colleagues expected to find more small mammals. This time, while we didn't 'capture' any more White-footed Dunnarts or Antechinus, we saw some of our favourite locals and fortunately no feral cats, deer or foxes.

To attract animals to the camera, a 'bait' made from peanut butter, vegemite, oats and molasses is put in an impenetrable container. Sometimes the cameras catch animals with no interest in our offering – this oblivious



koala *Phascolarctos cinereus*, was just passing through and showed no interest in the bait. An echidna was also snapped as it wandered past. By contrast, Swamp Wallabies, *Wallabia bicolor*, often spend a long time trying to get at the food. This one decided to investigate the camera too and took a selfie.

The survey will continue at least for the next six months as we map the distribution of indigenous and feral animals in the valley. **Gretel Lamont**



## WONDERFUL WILDFLOWER WALK – October 19

The wildflower walk in October is always one of our most enjoyable activities as our heathlands burst into bloom displaying a wonderful variety of flowers for us to admire. This year we chose to walk Harrison Track South taking us into the Anglesea River valley. As 4WD vehicles were needed to get people to the start of the walk on Ridge View Track we were very grateful to Parks Vic rangers Katrina and Scott, who helped transport our group of 13 to the start of the walk and came back later to bring people back to their cars. It was a bit like a military operation but it all went smoothly!

The weather was typical spring conditions – there was a cold wind early in the day but that dropped and we had short bursts of sunshine intermingled with just one short shower of rain. However, everything soon settled down and it was a great day for a walk through varying vegetative communities.

The Shining Peppermint *Eucalyptus falciformis* a small eucalypt, greeted us as we started the walk with its attractive creamy-white flowers highlighted by the dark green foliage of the tree. There was such a variety of plants in flower with so many different colours. The Victorian Smoke Bush was in full bloom and looked quite spectacular: masses of white Silky Tea-tree intermingled with pink, red and white heath: a splash of purple alerted us to the Heath Milkwort and so it went on and on!

As to be expected the vegetation changed as we went from one vegetative community to another – the white to pink flowers of the Spike Beard Heath, the orange-yellow of the peas, the bright flower heads of the Yellow Rice-flower and the yellow Guinea Flowers, the red and yellow of the Correa – it was a tapestry of colour!



Above and below left: The constant and ever-changing display had the group making frequent stops.



Unfortunately, the sun was not hot enough to convince the sun orchids to open, although the cheerful yellow Rabbit Ears, scattered in colonies along the track, tried valiantly to open and we found one flower displaying its two distinctive brown ears.

We recognised Salmon Sun Orchids and at least three species of our blue orchids. Alison found one Flying Duck Orchid, obviously newly opened as it was in perfect condition standing on the side of the track saying “Look at me” while the Tiny Caladenia, Southern Bearded Greenhood, Heart Spiders, Donkey Orchids, Waxlips, Bronzy Caladenia, Mantis orchids and Large White Spider orchids said “We don’t need the sun’ and showed off all their beauty. There was also one Purple Beard Orchid just coming into flower.

Ros recorded 125 species of flowers with 16 species of orchids. The birds too were enjoying the heathlands and river valley, and

Phil recorded 24 species. The Rufous Whistler was very vocal and we were excited to see that the Peregrine Falcons have decided to stay in the Alcoa freehold area and presently have a nest there.

It’s no wonder that the conservation groups fought so hard to have this area of the Anglesea Heath included into the Great Otway National Park, and it was great that the Friends were able to share this special walk with each other. A big thanks to Wendy who made a trail of rubbish by bringing out dumped materials and leaving on the side of the track for Scott and Katrina to collect – we should just leave our footprints and take away our memories - and we had plenty of those! **Margaret MacDonald**

Below: Some eye-catching plants and flowers seen during the walk – from left Shining Peppermint, Heath Milkwort, Victorian Smoke-bush.





## FRIENDS' ACTIVITIES SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER



Above: Our intrepid E-bike riders practise their skills in the training paddock and (above right) receiving last minute safety instructions.

### E-BIKE RIDE THROUGH NATURE AT CAPE OTWAY - November 16



After an early start, 11 of us (eight riders & three walkers) enjoyed morning tea at Bimbi Park, Cape Otway. After selecting our bikes, we spent a short time acquainting ourselves with how our bikes worked, adjusting our seats and doing a few practice laps in the training paddock. There were lots of laughs and yelps as we familiarised ourselves with the pedal assist and small throttle abilities of some of our bikes.

We soon headed off down the road, entering a neighbouring property. The terrain was undulating with a few sharp hills, sweeping views, and stands of Manna Gum trees showing the effects of over-browsing by the local koala population whilst Messmate trees seemed untouched.

Early on, a Wedge-tailed Eagle was spotted high overhead. We eventually stopped on the high side of a hill to enjoy the incredible ocean views before heading back on a different track through a stunning stand of Messmate trees.

A fallow deer quietly grazing was spotted by a couple of riders on the return home and a wallaby passed the track in front of a couple of others. We rejoined the walkers for lunch and shared highlights of our respective adventures. **Sue Guinness**

Below: Walkers Marg Elso and Kaye Traynor (at left) went looking for orchids, observing Onion Orchid as well as Native Elderberry with one species unidentified - any suggestions?



### Welcome NEW MEMBERS

We welcome five new members to our group – Wendy Stainton, Wendy O'Malley, Melanie Costanzo Helen Williams and Kaye Greenwood

**STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!**  
**AGM guest speaker. Topic: OTWAYS BIOSCAN**  
Dr Genefer Walker-Smith, Senior Collection Manager – Invertebrates, Museums Victoria.  
**2pm Sunday February 9 2020 at the CFA Anglesea.**



**BIODIVERSITY BLITZ PROVES POPULAR**



Each September the Friends of Eastern Otways celebrate the arrival of spring and the explosion of life that comes with it. We are the caretakers of a 'biodiversity hotspot' which means there is an unusual diversity of life concentrated within the areas we volunteer in and monitor. During Biodiversity Month citizen scientists are encouraged to upload their observations of biodiversity to the online database, iNaturalist, where they will be identified by amateurs and experts alike. This year both the number of observations and the individually identified species was much higher than last year.

During the month, educational activities were offered in different habitats to try to get images and observations of the greatest variety of life possible. This year we partnered with Parks Victoria and GORCC to run sessions in some areas of the Great Otway National Park and along the coastal foreshore.



One such event was run on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>, dubbed 'Spooky Biodiversity' because of the date, and we searched for the nocturnal creatures that might be considered scary. There were quite a few insects about, some moths, and we heard the distinctive calls of Yellow-bellied Gliders and Boobook Owls when we went for a walk. Local biologist Craig set up nets and captured a Little Forest Bat (*Vespadelus vultunus*). The event was well attended (30+) and set the scene for similar activities in partnership in the years to come.

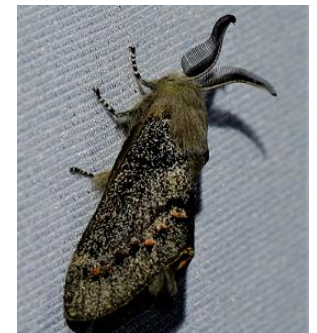
During the month we took 655 observations of 361 species all in the Surf Coast. As usual, the plants made up the bulk of species recorded (181), both because it was a stunning start to the flowering season and because they don't move as fast as animals do!

Our most observed species was a Waxlip Orchid. A recently described species of Drosera (Sundew) was observed, and the author of the paper commented on the observation! The access to experts in the field is one of the things I love most about iNaturalist.



We recorded on iNaturalist some 55 species of birds, 32 species of insects, 28 species of fungi, 13 species of mammals, seven species of Arachnid and even five species of fish (despite my efforts the underwater photos turned out terribly, fortunately they could still be used to identify the type of fish).

Thanks to everyone who participated, especially Neil Tucker who really 'blitzed' the field with 221 observations uploaded himself! Watch this space for details for next year or get in touch to find out about other biodiversity activities happening during the year. **Peter Crowcroft.**



*Left from top: Brown Thornbill, Pale Sundew, Eastern Yellow Robin, and on right, Concealer Moth on a Donkey Orchid (B. Lingham), Little Forest Bat, and Common Pinara.*



**ROSS MURRAY**

The Friends of Eastern Otways were very sad to learn about the passing of Ross Murray. Ross had been a valued member of the Friends' Committee for many years and during that time he was always willing to assist with the various projects involving the Friends' group.

We very much appreciated Ross's input when setting up displays at the ANGAIR Show, or planning for mammal surveys, participating in excursions, and joining in or leading walks in the Great Otway National Park. Ross always contributed practical suggestions to any discussion at our monthly Committee Meetings. Ross was well respected and will be deeply missed by his many friends and associates. We extend our sympathy and support to Merle. **Kaye Traynor.**

*At left: Ross Murray at the Annual Koala Survey 2016 with his wife Merle and joined by Ross Davey and Alison Watson.*



**JUNIOR RANGER FUN**

It's always fun sharing our knowledge of the beautiful flowers in our National Park with others, and the families that came along to participate in Parks Victoria Junior Ranger Program on October 2 really enjoyed the activity. With the sun shining, the flowers that we had chosen for the children to find and then place a sticker on their flower sheet, were easily able to be discovered. The only one that was a problem was the Trigger Plant that was still in tight bud, but thanks to the Otways Indigenous Nursery we had some plants



in pots that we placed beside the budding specimens in the field. It is always fun to show the children and the parents how this amazing plant uses its triggers to facilitate pollination. One dad remarked that he would now have a new incentive when he next took his family for a walk in the Park.

The Large White Spider Orchids, the Large Bearded Greenhoods and the Heart Spider Orchids were in full bloom and the groups were very interested to know why the Bearded Greenhood now had the new name of *Pterostylis unicornis*.

We look forward to continuing to support Parks Vic with their Junior Ranger Programs. **Margaret MacDonald**

**A SPECIAL PLANT IN THE PARK**

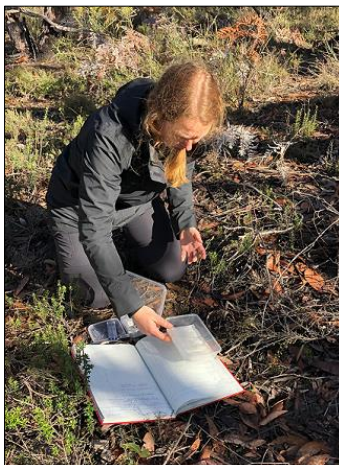
Mantis Orchid *Caladenia tentaculata*

Most people are familiar with the large greencomb spider orchid that flowers freely in the spring in many parts of Anglesea. It is indeed a very impressive orchid with its long green marginal teeth standing up above the column, its petals and sepals with a maroon stripe down the centre and the white labellum with four rows of red stalked calli and red tip.

From time to time we get magnificent hybrids between *Caladenia tentaculata* and the Large White Spider Orchid *Caladenia venusta* with the hybrid species showing varying characteristics of the two parents – the orchids are always strong in appearance.

This year when a few of the Friends group mingled with the Geelong Field Naturalists group in the Harvey St heathlands we were amazed to find an unfamiliar version of *Caladenia tentaculata* growing beside the normal flowers. Indeed, it looked as though the elves might have been busy with their paint brushes and paints to change the colour of our Mantis Orchid. We noted six specimens in close proximity.

The calli and the tip of the labellum were pink, not red, the petals and the sepals were yellow not green with a red stripe, and the clubs were bright yellow, rather than the yellowish brown we are used to. I have discovered there is a term to denote this occurrence and that it happens from time to time in various flowers – it is called xanthic (a new word for scrabble) It is not too clear why it happens - chlorophyll deficiency of some sort – but it has resulted in some eye-catching orchids in our Anglesea heathlands! **Margaret MacDonald**



.....And from page 1, more about ***Caladenia maritima* Angahook Fingers**

Since then the numbers have fluctuated widely with our highest count being 1208 orchids in 2013. We almost reached that total again this year with a count of 1178 flowers.

We were a little disappointed to see a large number of hybrid orchids between *Caladenia maritima* and *C.carnea*, Pink Fingers. We counted over 200 hybrids before stopping counting. Gary Backhouse in his new text states 'that it is possible that seedlings established after a single hybridisation event, have now reached flowering age and size.' They are very beautiful and I guess there is room for them to grow together.

Our exciting news is that Vic ANOS has been successful in obtaining a grant to work in partnership with staff from Royal Botanic Gardens to cultivate *Caladenia maritima* in their sterile conditions at Cranbourne. where many threatened species of orchids have successfully been grown from seed. Noushka Reiter (pictured left) from Cranbourne visited the site on July 12 and collected a sample from the tubers of the orchid that has been used to grow the necessary fungus, and Neil Anderton who works at the herbarium visited the site in September and cross pollinated 40 specimens. He collected the seed pods on November 8. Here's hoping there's a happy ending!

Hello Friends,

In preparation for another great summer on the coast, our Parks staff are busy getting the Great Otway National Park ready for the high fire danger period and the peak season for our visitors.

**SUMMER SAFETY IN THE PARK**

Please make sure to keep safe if you are out in the park. Summer is a fantastic time but ensure you do some planning before heading out for a walk. Inform people of where you are going, carry plenty of water and a map with you, and check fire conditions in the area. Last summer I encountered people who were struggling on a walk - they all had no hat and no water.

**DIRT BIKE COMPLIANCE**

Our targeted compliance of dirt bike riders in the Great Otway National Park has once again made national news with articles on Fairfax websites in each state, and an article in the *Herald Sun*. These



articles and the on-ground operation have been very successful in getting the message out. In the last two years of our motorbike compliance operation, Parks Victoria staff have witnessed a remarkable reduction in illegal behaviour. During these compliance weekends we also had assistance from the Police, DELWP and the Parks Victoria motorbike team.

**ARK CAMERAS**

Our Otway Ark Ranger, Claire Miller, has been busy putting out cameras again for the Otway Ark project. For those of you who haven't heard about the Otway Ark Project, it is a Landscape approach to controlling introduced predators

across the Otway Ranges. Part of this project is to study the effectiveness of the program and to collect data on what critters share the Great Otway National Park. Claire has just finished putting the camera out in Anglesea Heath area. Hopefully we will have some interesting animals pop up in the images. At right is a recent highlight, a lovely shot of a Southern Brown Bandicoot, which was taken in the Carlisle Heath.

**CAMPGROUND UPGRADE**

I have good news about camping in the Great Otway National Park. Frank Gleeson is just starting the process of upgrading some of our campgrounds, using much-needed funding that was allocated in the last state budget as part of the Great Outdoors Package. Hammond's, Hammond's North, Allenvale, and Big Hill Campgrounds will all have improvements and upgrades. These changes will offer campers a better experience and will help protect these camping grounds from overuse. As part of the upgrades, some of these campgrounds will become booked sites with a small fee. Most of our camping grounds on the Surf Coast are currently free. Whilst we enjoy offering this to the public, it does present management issues, which will hopefully be lessened with a campground upgrade.



**WEED WORKS**

Thankyou to everyone in the Friends for sending pictures and telling me about weed sightings. Please keep up the excellent work and send though your weed information and photos!

As you can imagine, we at Parks Victoria have a large area to cover and any help we get to identify and treat weeds early is critical. For example, recently I have been very busy removing many new sites of South African Weed Orchid. I would have never found some of these sites on my own and I am glad people mentioned these infestations to me. If these sites were untreated it would mean a much bigger problem next year, not only damaging to biodiversity but also costly. At left is a photo of this invasive South African Weed Orchid in case you see any in your walks in the area.



**SPRING MOWING**

Finally, I would like to highlight the amazing work of our Field Service Officers and Rangers, who every year do an amazing job of brushcutting and mowing to get our walking tracks, picnic grounds, and campgrounds ready for summer.

**Thank you** once again to everybody for helping us look after the Great Otway National Park, Matt Russell, Ranger, Lorne.