

HFNC Excursion to Cobboboonee NP & Mt Clay SF, 22 Nov. 2014

Rod Bird

Attendees were Ken & Janeen, Rod & Diane, Dave & Lyn, Reto & Yvonne, with Portland Field Naturalist Club members Ruth & Ivor Graney and Kay Aldridge who were our guides.

The trip began in Hamilton at 9 am with some light showers but was fine and warm later in the Portland area. Later in the afternoon the wind became quite strong, making it difficult to photograph flowers.

Our group met Ivor & Ruth in Heywood and we proceeded then to the Cobboboonee National Park, going first to a heathland area in the NW area, through which the South West Walk runs. We were prepared for leeches and soon found one but they were not particularly troublesome, no doubt because of the dry conditions. We were to find that, because of the exceptionally dry spring, we were rather too late to see many flowering species. However, as shown in the table below, we did find quite a few, including *Caladenia congesta*, the showy Wedge-peas, Purple Flags and *Melaleuca squarrosa*. We heard Crescent Honeyeaters in the swampy areas dominated by *M. squarrosa*.

Our lunch stop was at Surry Ridge picnic area. We noted 2 nest boxes installed high on trees nearby. That was done some years ago after several hollow-bearing trees were removed from the site by DEPI – PFNC then prevailed on DEPI to take some restorative action because the area was well known as a roosting place for forest owls and gliders. We heard the Olive-backed Oriole and Olive Whistler calling near the picnic area. Both species are uncommon in the Hamilton area.

We walked on the circuit along the Surry River and back to the camp, passing through some stately Blackwoods (*Acacia melanoxylon*). That watercourse is usually very damp but not this year. We hoped to see Rufous Fantails and perhaps a Pink Robin but they, and leeches, were notably inconspicuous.

Birds seen or heard at Cobboboonee NP

Crescent Honeyeater	Olive Whistler	Silvereye
Golden Whistler	Olive-backed Oriole	Superb Fairy-wren
Grey Fantail	Rufous Whistler	Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoo
Grey Shrike-thrush	Shining Bronze-cuckoo	

After our picnic lunch we travelled to Mt Clay State Forest, stopping briefly at the Mt Clay Sand Pit area to view a large Duck Orchid (*Caleana major*) near the track to the pit. The wind was strong and no good photos were taken of this orchid. We then proceeded to Woolwash Rd and drove several kilometres through the huge area burned in the fire that DEPI lit last year and failed to control. Except for one tiny patch, the entire area had been burned and consequently the occupation of this woodland/heath by small mammals (Potoroo and Bandicoots, in particular) will take many years after the structure is regained.

The area was quite dry, whereas at this time of the year it would normally be damp. There had been a profuse flowering of Austral Grass Trees and Small Grass-trees – the latter were still blooming but the former had largely finished. The Purple Bladderworts had almost finished, too.

We left the Mt Clay SF at about 3 pm and returned to Heywood and then Hamilton, having had an enjoyable and relaxed day's outing in fine, warm weather.



Platylobium triangulare



Sphaerolobium vimineum

Plants in flower in the Cobboboonee NP (Surry Ridge, S & heathland, H) and Mt Clay SF (Woolwash Rd, W & Mt Clay Sandpit, P).

Botanic Name	Common Name	Cobb	Mt C
<i>Arthropodium fimbriatum</i>	Nodding Lily	S	
<i>Arthropodium strictum</i>	Chocolate Lily		W
<i>Bauera rubioides</i>	Wirv Bauera	H	
<i>Boronia nana</i>	Dwarf Boronia	H	
<i>Brachyscome</i> sp.	Daisy		W
<i>Brunonia australis</i>	Blue Pincushions		W
<i>Burchardia umbellata</i>	Milkmaids	H	W
<i>Caesia calliantha</i>	Blue grass-lily		W
<i>Caladenia congesta</i>	Black-tongue Orchid	H	
<i>Caladenia pusilla</i>	Tiny Fingers	S	
<i>Caleana major</i>	Large Duck-orchid		P
<i>Clematis</i> sp.	Clematis	S	
<i>Comesperma polygaloides</i>	Small Milkwort	H	
<i>Craspedia variabilis</i>	Common Billy-		W
<i>Davesia</i> sp.	Bitter-pea	H	
<i>Dianella</i> sp.	Flax-lily	H	
<i>Dillwynia cinerascens</i>	Grey Parrot-pea	S	
<i>Dillwynia glaberrima</i>	Smooth Parrot-pea	H	W
<i>Gastrodia sesamoides</i>	Cinnamon Bells	H	
<i>Gompholobium ecostatum</i>	Dwarf Wedge-pea	H, S	
<i>Gompholobium huegelii</i>	Common Wedge-pea	H	
<i>Goodenia geniculata</i>	Bent Goodenia	H, S	
<i>Gymnoschoenus sphaerocephalus</i>	Button-grass	H	
<i>Helichrysum obtusifolium</i>	Blunt Everlasting		W
<i>Hibbertia</i> sp.	Guinea-flower	H	W
<i>Leptospermum continentale</i>	Prickly Tea-tree	H	
<i>Leptospermum myrsinoides</i>	Heath Tea-tree		
<i>Leucopogon virgata</i>	Twiggy Beard-heath	H	
<i>Melaleuca sauarrosa</i>	Scented Paperbark	H, S	
<i>Oxalis perennans</i>	Grassland Wood-	S	W
<i>Patersonia occidentalis</i>	Long Purple-flag	H	
<i>Patersonia fragilis</i>	Short Purple-flag	H	
<i>Pelargonium australe</i>	Austral Storks-bill	S	
<i>Platylobium triangulare</i>	Ivy Flat-pea	S	
<i>Ranunculus lappaceus</i>	Common Buttercup	S	W
<i>Sphaerolobium vimineum</i>	Leaf-less Globe-pea	S	
<i>Sprengelia incarnata</i>	Pink Swamp-heath	H	
<i>Stackhousia monogyva</i>	Creamy Candles		W
<i>Stylidium graminifolium</i>	Grass Trigger-plant	H, S	W
<i>Thysanotus patersonii</i>	Twining Fringe-lily	S	W
<i>Utricularia dichotoma</i>	Purple Bladderwort		W
<i>Viola hederacea</i>	Ivy-leaf Violet	H, S	W
<i>Wahlenbergia</i> (2 sp.)	Bluebells	H, S	W
<i>Xanthorrhoea australis</i>	Austral Grass-tree	H	W
<i>Xanthorrhoea minor</i>	Small Grass-tree		W



Gymnoschoenus sphaerocephalus



Caladenia congesta



Dillwynia cinerascens



Patersonia occidentalis



Melaleuca squarrosa