

HFNC Excursion to Little Youngs & Youngs SF

Report for Sunday 12 June 2011

Reto Zollinger, Rod Bird, Diane Luhrs & Jane Hayes

This was a fine day but cool to begin. We had 14 starters. One objective was to set up 5 remote cameras in the bush area, with the aim of returning 2 weeks later to check the results and move the cameras to new positions. Reto had checked the system and we set 2 in clay flats area in Little Youngs area, among Yellow Gums, Buloke and logs, and 2 on sandy dune area nearby (Brown Stringybark and heath). The fifth was set up in a Stringybark/heathy area near the boundary with Youngs SF. The forest tracks were quite firm and not too wet.

We noted hundreds of leaves of *Pyrorchis nigricans* (Red Beaks) and a few flowering *Leporella fimbriata* (Fringed Hare Orchids) on the dune area. Emu Heath was flowering profusely, obviously having enjoyed the damp summer and autumn. On the flats, some Buloke still had cones, with seed still intact (it usually sheds in autumn). There were many young Buloke regenerating. Scarlet robins were busy in the area (see photo).

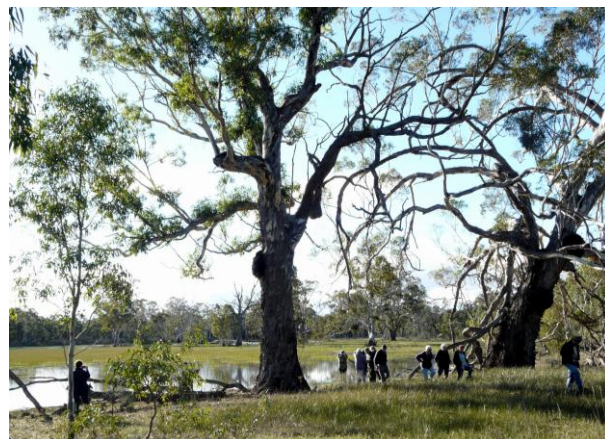
On checking the cameras 2 weeks later, Reto found one clear photo of Yellow-footed Antechinus, several shots of Brushtail Possums, White-throated Treecreepers and perhaps a fox.

We visited our camping area of 25-26 May 2002, adjacent to a swamp just inside the Youngs SF block (first photo below). This time it had about 30 cm of water over the entire area, compared with the dry bed we found in 2002. We had good views of Fantail Cuckoo (see photo), Jacky Winter and other birds there.

Further along, we came to more wetlands with large River Red Gums around (see photo below), the swamp this time was full of water – I suspect we had not know it existed when we were last here. A few ducks were seen there, Wood Duck and Shelduck. A birdlist for the day is attached to this report.

We continued around a circuit, hoping to come to the large clump of Austral Grass Trees, but we had “mislaidd” them. Back into Little Youngs SF again, Reto and the others set up the 5th camera while Diane and Rod, with the Cayleys, left early to check out the area for our next excursion. We returned via Kanagulk lake. This was a quite full, a large expanse of water. We noted, too, that Black Swamp near Balmoral had a good volume of water. It is the first time for many years that I have noticed any water there.

We visited the Balmoral SF a few km east of Balmoral. After a couple of false runs we found the entry off the Rocklands Rd to the river. This follows the line of the Rocklands Channel to Toolondo. We drove along the channel after entering the forest reserve near the river and dropped down to the Glenelg River. A most interesting thing there was the construction of the channel around the hillside.



HFNC BIRDLISTS Youngs State Forest (May 2002 to June 2011)

No.	Species	25-26 May 2002	21Oct 2006	12 Jun 2011
1	Australasian pipit	*		
2	Australian shelduck	*		*
3	Australian magpie	*		*
4	Australian raven	*		
5	Australian wood duck			*
6	Black-chinned honeyeater	*		
7	Black-faced cuckoo-shrike			*2
8	Brolga			*call
9	Brown thornbill	*		
10	Brown treecreeper	*		
11	Brown-headed honeyeater	*		
12	Buff-rumped thornbill	*		*
13	Common bronzewing	*		
14	Crested pigeon			*1
15	Crested shrike-tit, e fm	*		
16	Crimson rosella	*		*
17	Eastern rosella	*		*
18	Emu	*		*
19	Fan-tailed cuckoo			*2
20	Galah	*		*
21	Gang-gang cockatoo	*		
22	Golden whistler	*		
23	Grey currawong	*		*
24	Grey fantail	*		*
25	Grey shrike-thrush	*		*
26	Hooded robin	*		
27	Jacky winter	*		*2
28	Laughing kookaburra	*		*
29	Little eagle	*		
30	Little raven			*
31	Long-billed corella	*		*
32	Masked lapwing	*		*2
33	Musk lorikeet	*		
34	New Holland honeyeater	*		
35	Purple-crowned lorikeet	*		
36	Red wattlebird	*		*
37	Red-rumped parrot	*		
38	Red-tailed black-cockatoo		*2	
39	Restless flycatcher	*		
40	Scarlet robin	*		*2
41	Silvereye			*
42	Southern boobook	*	*1	
43	Spotted pardalote	*		*
44	Striated fieldwren			*?
45	Striated pardalote	*		*
46	Striated thornbill	*		*
47	Stubble quail	*		
48	Sulphur-crested cockatoo	*		*
49	Superb fairy-wren	*		*
50	Swamp harrier			*?
51	Tawny frogmouth	*		
52	Wedge-tailed eagle	*		*
53	Weebill	*		*
54	White-browed babbler	*		
55	White-eared honeyeater	*		
56	White-faced heron	*		*
57	White-fronted honeyeater	*		
58	White-naped honeyeater	*		
59	White-plumed honeyeater			*
60	White-throated treecreeper	*		*
61	White-winged chough	*		
62	Willie wagtail	*		*
63	Yellow-faced honeyeater			*
64	Yellow-tufted honeyeater	*		*1
65	Yellow-rumped thornbill	*		

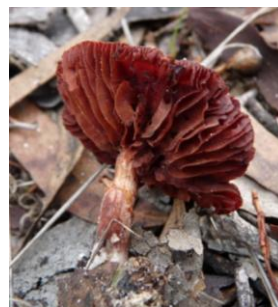
A number of different species of fungi were found both on the ground and on rotting wood. (photos – Diane Luhrs)



Puffball



Snowy Waxy-gills (?)
Hygrophorus sp



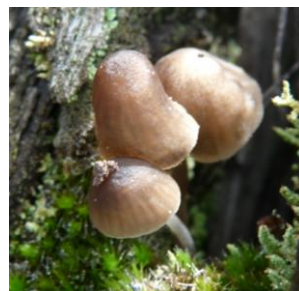
Coprinus sp (?)



?



Bracket fungus



Mycena sp



?



Omphalina chromacea



Bolete sp

Fungi list by Dave Munro

Little Youngs - Youngs State Forest 12.6.2011

There were many more fungi seen on the day but none were identified.

Listed by Name and Type:

- *Tubaria rufofulva*, gilled (Fungimap target)
- *Clitocybe clitociboides*, gilled
- *Cortinarius sinapicolor* (Slimy Yellow Cortinar), gilled
- *Laccaria laterita*, gilled
- *Laccaria* sp, gilled
- *Coltricia cinnamomea* (Fairies Stool), pored
- *Podoscypha petalodes* (eath fan), pored
- *Pycnoporus coccineus* (Scarlet Bracket Fungus), pored
- *Omphalina chromacea* (Yellow Belly Buttons), gilled
- *Bolitus* sp, pored
- *Cortinarius cinnamomii*, gilled



Giant Brown Mantid, *Hierodula majuscula* egg mass

Meri found some foam like capsules on a stick, explaining that they were Brown Mantid eggs. Following some home work, Meri found the following article applicable to the **Green Mantid (*Hierodula majuscula*)** (similar to the Brown Mantid) on the Victoria Museum web site:

In mantids, eggs are produced in a foamy mass called an ootheca, which is typically adhered to a twig or stem. The egg mass itself is fascinating- produced as a wet foam it hardens on contact with the air much like ‘foam-a-

fill' from a pressure pack can. In the wild the female will stay by her ootheca for perhaps a few days before moving away and never returning. The ootheca containing hundreds of developing mantid eggs will be targeted by tiny parasitic wasps, which lay their eggs into the ootheca. The wasp hatchlings emerge first to feed upon the unhatched mantids, finally drilling a small escape hole when they have completed their own metamorphosis. Despite this attack, numerous mantids usually survive to emerge themselves in one of the most spectacular hatching events in the natural world. The babies- tiny replicas of the adult- emerge attached to sticky threads, which they use to 'bungee jump' out from the base of the ootheca, and hang below. After some minutes they detach and wander off to fend for themselves.

Reto and Co. decided to visit Lake Kanagulk on the way home and were lucky to see two pairs of Brolga immediately as they turned down the road. They were in the paddock currently being mined by Iluka and were grazing amongst the stubble. Lake Kanagulk also had water but not many waterbirds, again possible scared away as this was the last weekend of the duck hunting season.

Reto's notes on the use of the remote cameras:

Due to very hectic weekends prior to the excursion, the aim of the trip ended up being the setting up rather than collection of data from 5 remote infrared cameras to conduct further fauna survey in these forest areas that are likely to be targeted for future mineral sands extraction. Stage 1 of the mineral sands extraction is currently underway in the surrounding private land. The mineral sands strands continue under these public forest areas.

The vegetation targeted by this current round of fauna survey were the Redgum-Buloke ecotone woodlands, stringy bark dominated heathy woodlands and the Yellow Box-heathy woodland ecotone on the edge of the reserve. In the following weeks the cameras were shifted to Bear SF south of the Rocklands Dam.

The cameras were located between 100 and 200m from the track. We are trying to target Tuans so we carefully selecting the most suitable trees having rough bark and preferably hollows, as this would be their preferred habitat. We GPSed both the point on the track and the selected trees and took photo point for each selected tree.

Recent research on Camera trapping was presented at the 'Biodiversity Across the Borders' conference in Ballarat, attended by several of our members. Angling the cameras down instead of horizontally gave better photos. We used this method, setting up some cameras to target arboreal mammals (e.g. Tuans); other cameras to target arboreals (e.g. Sugar Gliders) and ground-dwellers (e.g. bandicoots) by putting baits 30 cm above ground and cameras low in the tree.

Animals most photographed were Brush-tail Possums, Wallaby (at night) and Brown tree Creeper (day). Other animals: Echidna, Yellow-footed Antechinus (night), Raven, Currawong, Magpie and Rosella (day). The only pest animal was a Fox. An exciting find in the last session in Bear SF was the Eastern Pygmy Possum in a location dominated by Silver Banksia, an area listed to be burned soon (FOP).

