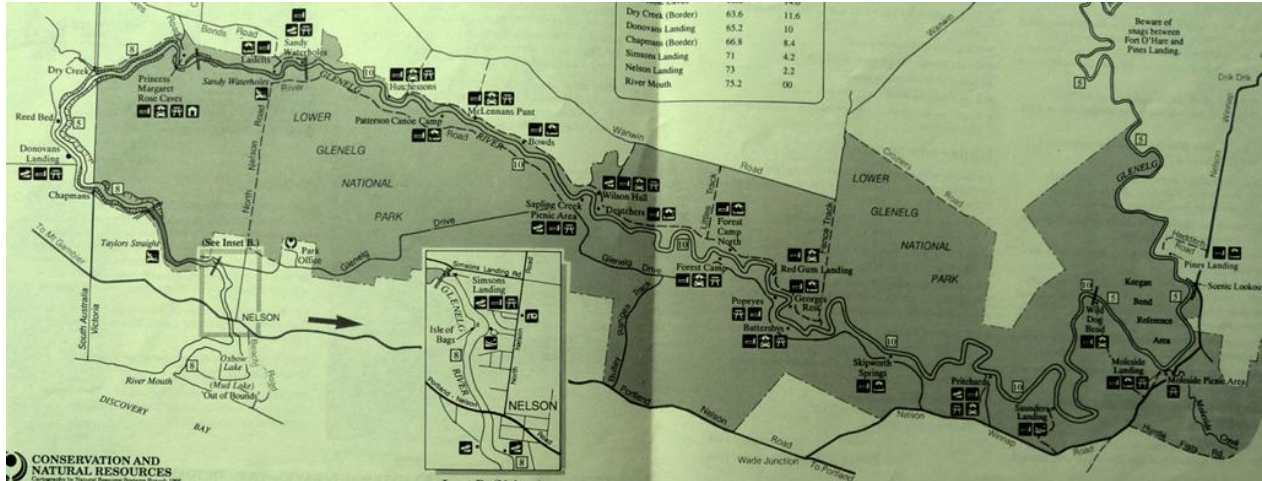


# HFNC canoe trip on the Lower Glenelg River in January 2001

Rod Bird

**Participants:** D Luhrs & R Bird, D & L Munro, P Moon, J Spark & friends.

This excursion was for a 4-day, 75 km canoe trip in the **Lower Glenelg National Park**, on the Glenelg River from near Dartmoor to Nelson. Others were following by car from camp to camp.



**Thursday 11 January:** We left our vehicles at Paxton Canoes and the hire company took our canoes to the **Waterfall Gardens**, 2 km downstream from **Dartmoor**. At 10.30 am we launched our canoes. At this stage we were mostly travelling through cleared farmland on both sides. There were many snags in the river to negotiate. The water level was not high.

At one point we met a herd of cattle tramping along the top of a high bank. In their haste to depart, one was bumped off the bank and fell into the water below with a great splash. It swam 20 or 30 m downstream to a point where it could clamber out and rejoin the herd.

We arrived at **Pines Landing** at 6 pm. This was our first camp. We had seen 2 Azure Kingfishers and 2 Sacred Kingfishers along the way. Among many other birds, we also saw 2 Spotted Harriers, uncommon this far south.

At dusk and again at dawn we heard a Powerful Owl calling from across the river. Australian Boobooks were calling during the night.

**Friday 12 January:** We left camp at 7.45 am and arrived at **Moleside** 1 hr later. After a further 50 minutes we arrived at **Saunders Landing**. Continuing on, we arrived at **Skipworth Springs** at 1 pm, where we had lunch. We saw 3 Azure Kingfishers and 3 Nankeen Night-herons on the morning stages.



Downstream from Pines Landing



Azure Kingfisher

We left Skipworth Springs at 2.25 pm and arrived at **Battersbys** at 3.25 pm. We paddled on to **Forest Camp North**, arriving at 4.30 pm. We met the 'support crew' (Dave and Lyn) again and set up camp. We saw 5 Azure Kingfishers in the afternoon. Rod went fishing and caught a couple of small Black Bream.

**Saturday 13 January:** Rod went for a little paddle at sunrise and saw a Water Rat (*Hydromys crysogaster*) cruising along the edge of reed beds. Jennie Spark and friends unloaded 3 canoes and enjoyed the day on the river and in the bush.

We left Forest Camp North at 9 am and arrived at **Deutchers** by 10.05 am. **Sapling Creek** and then **Sandy Waterhole** were next. This section has some picturesque cliffs.



Glenelg River cliff near Sandy Waterholes

Our camp that night was at **Lasslets**, at which we reached at mid-day. This camp is at the start of the Ski Area. This was a very hot day. Late in the afternoon we saw Pacific Swifts and White-throated Needle-tails overhead. Tawny-crowned Honeyeaters and Varied Sittella were also seen here.

**Sunday 14 January:** We paddled away from Lasslets at 7.45 am, travelling outside the ski lane. We had noted the occurrence earlier of Yellow Gum (*E. leucoxylon* subsp. *megalocarpa*) growing right on the edge of the river at the base of towering cliffs.



*Eucalyptus leucoxylon* ssp. *megalocarpa*



Cliffs downstream from Pattersons

We arrived at **Simsons Landing** at 11.15 am and had lunch there. This boat launch place was not the most scenic or comfortable place to stop. This area is just downstream from Taylor Strait.

We paddled down past Nelson to the mouth of the Glenelg River then back to the landing at **Nelson**. Time then to unpack the canoes and load them onto a trailer and return to the Paxton hire place.

**Birdlist for the January 2001 canoe trip in the Lower Glenelg National Park.**

- |                               |                            |                                  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Australian White Ibis      | 24. Great Egret            | 47. Sacred Kingfisher            |
| 2. Australian Boobook         | 25. Grey Currawong         | 48. Silver Gull                  |
| 3. Australian Magpie          | 26. Grey Fantail           | 49. Silvereye                    |
| 4. Australian Pelican         | 27. Grey Shrike-thrush     | 50. Spotted Harrier              |
| 5. Australian Pied Cormorant  | 28. Grey Teal              | 51. Spotted Pardalote            |
| 6. Australian Reed-warbler    | 29. Laughing Kookaburra    | 52. Sulphur-crested Cockatoo     |
| 7. Australian Wood Duck       | 30. Little Black Cormorant | 53. Superb Fairy-wren            |
| 8. Azure Kingfisher           | 31. Little Pied Cormorant  | 54. Tawny-crowned Honeyeater     |
| 9. Black Swan                 | 32. Little Tern            | 55. Tree Martin                  |
| 10. Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike | 33. Little Wattlebird      | 56. Varied Sittella              |
| 11. Brown Thornbill           | 34. Musk Duck              | 57. Wedge-tailed Eagle           |
| 12. Chestnut Teal             | 35. Nankeedn Night-heron   | 58. Welcome Swallow              |
| 13. Common Blackbird          | 36. New Holland Honeyeater | 59. White-browed Scrubwren       |
| 14. Common Bronzewing         | 37. Pacific Black Duck     | 60. White-faced Heron            |
| 15. Crested Shrike-tit        | 38. Pacific Swift          | 61. White-naped Honeyeater       |
| 16. Crimson Rosella           | 39. Pied Currawong         | 62. White-throated Needle-tail   |
| 17. Dusky Moorhen             | 40. Pied Oystercatcher     | 63. White-throated Tree-creeper  |
| 18. Dusky Woodswallow         | 41. Powerful Owl           | 64. Eastern Yellow Robin         |
| 19. Eurasian Coot             | 42. Purple Swamphen        | 65. Yellow-faced Honeyeater      |
| 20. Forest Raven              | 43. Red Wattlebird         | 66. Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoo |
| 21. Gang Gang Cockatoo        | 44. Red-browed Finch       | 67. Yellow-billed Spoonbill      |
| 22. Golden Whistler           | 45. Royal Spoonbill        |                                  |
| 23. Great Cormorant           | 46. Rufous Whistler        |                                  |



Crested Shrike-tit



Gang Gang Cockatoo

The following photos are in sequence from Waterfall Gardens. There were many snags in the water in the first few kms but the water level was sufficient to avoid having to portage any section.



Penny & Diane before departure





Penny, Diane & Rod



First stages of the travel through farmland



Rocks & logs ahead



Forested banks and wide river



Jones Lookout cliff



Diane & Rod at a landing



Dave, Lyn, Penny & Rod at a camp



Morning reflections



The group incl. Jennie's friends at camp



*Coprosmia quadrifida* (Prickly Currant Bush)



Black Swans & cygnets



Diane & Rod in the loaded Canadian-style canoe



The 'day paddlers' launching



A sandy bay with reeds, tea-tree and other shrubs



Steep limestone banks with tall trees



Approaching the high limestone cliffs area in the wide gorge



Limestone gorge and wide river



Woolly Tea-tree (*Leptospermum lanigerum*) edge



Nelson and the river boat houses



Loading the canoes at Nelson

The party returned to Paxton's where canoes were transferred to the respective vehicles and we departed, having enjoyed four days of good weather on this splendid river.