



Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club Newsletter



The view from Spencer Hill - Mount Gillen in the distance.

More details on how this little Eastside walk is faring on Page 3.

Thanks to Rosalie Breen for the photo.

Organised meetings and presentations are currently cancelled due to health restrictions.

Hopefully we can start some activities soon.

We will let you know by email when we restart.

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Follow us on Facebook!

NEWSLETTER

The next newsletter will be July 2020

The deadline for the July newsletter will be 23rd June.

Please send your contributions to Barb Gilfedder: bjfedders@gmail.com

You can also send any photos or reports of anything that you think other Field Naturalists might be interested in to Barb anytime and she will forward to the Membership.

I would also encourage everyone to add posts to our Facebook site.

Many thanks to Meg Mooney for helping with these!

Alice Springs Field Naturalists Club Committee Members

President	Barbara Gilfedder	8955 5452
Vice-President	Lee Ryall	0417 401 237
Secretary	Kimberley Morgan	0402 527 195
Treasurer	Neil Woolcock	8955 1021
Property Officer	Rosalie Breen	8952 3409
Public Officer	Anne Pye	0438 388 012

Committee Members:

Anne Pye	0438 388 012
Margaret Friedel	0417 849 743

Other Club Responsibilities:

Newsletter – Barb Gilfedder	bjfedders@gmail.com
Facebook Admin. – Meg Mooney	moon3@iinet.net.au
Website - Robyn Grey-Gardner	8952 2207

Restrictions are easing

We regret that we have had to suspend all ASFNC meetings. Many of our local parks and reserves are still closed. I believe that the bio-security areas restrictions will be eased on June 5, so I am hopeful that more will open then.

The Alice Springs Telegraph Station and Simpsons Gap remain open and some walks at Ellery and Ormiston are available. To check if a park or reserve is open go to

<https://nt.gov.au/leisure/parks-reserves/plan-your-visit>

The Alice Springs Desert Park has reopened, as has Standley Chasm, and their cafes.

Keep your eyes on when things open and what the restrictions are and then we can organise some Field Naturalists' trips. Let me know if you wish to lead a walk or excursion and I will forward to the membership. If you wish to limit numbers of people or vehicles let me know that, too.



Anne Pye sent in this lovely view of hills, rocks and Ptilotus taken from the hills behind the scout hall.

New hope on Spencer Hill by Rosalie Breen

I haven't been up on Spencer Hill for a while, and while I was gone it has become dry like most of the area, and defaced a little too. In the Second World War time there was a machine gun stationed on the rocks on the south side of the hill, a lookout for enemy planes. On the rocks was a dead euro. Nearby a *Sarcostemma* (now officially *Cynanchum viminale subsp. australe*) used to grow. It is not there now. Close to the actual summit a landmark of a Whitewood, *Atalaya hemiglauca*, which unfortunately got burnt some time ago, is now not there either. Some people have been up there and not respected this beautiful and sacred place, as campfires have created an eyesore of blackened rocks and grey ash on flat rock benches. And down on the saddle is an old campsite's rubbish and a couple of campsites now in use, with their tents.

BUT

All is not gloom. Springing out of the whitewood rock are new growths of the tree trying again. Other bushes of *Sarcostemma* have been producing long "bean" pods and thanks to Jocelyn, I was in time to catch a couple of open pods with fly-away feathery seeds which as I watched, were being blown away by the wind. Nestling close to rocks I found a fresh green Mintbush, *Prostanthera striatiflora*, and a healthy *Eremophila freelingii*, looking better than those on the lower slopes. A *Ptilotus helipteroides*, growing out of almost bare ground, was showing off its purple flowers. The vigorous Rock Fig tree, *Ficus platypoda*, was a yellow feast of fruit. Not ripe yet, need to darken. The views are still picture perfect of course and an uplift for the soul.



Above: Desecration and death on Spencer Hill.



Cynanchum viminale subsp. australe seed pods...



...fluffy seeds inside being dispersed by the wind.



Atalaya hemiglauca shooting from the base.



Immature yellow fruit on *Ficus platypoda*

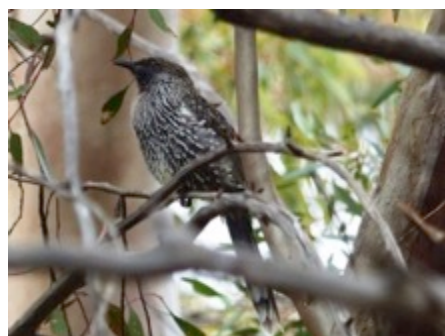
A Photographers trip on the Fleurieu Peninsula by Johannes Ammerschlaeger – Part 2

Johannes was going to present this as a slide show at our April meeting. So many beautiful photos – Thanks Johannes!



Nangawooka Flora Reserve

Melaleuca huegellii (white bush and flowers);
Melaleuca huegellii (pink);
Melaleuca uncinata;
Melaleuca hypericifolia;
Hakea leucoptervis;
Grevillea 'Fire Sprite';
Banksia praemorsa;
Swansonia galegifolia;
 Little Wattlebird;
 Superb Fairy-wren.





Inman Valley - Glacier Rock

Hindmarsh Valley Falls

Newland Head CP

Waitpinga Creek

Waitpinga Beach

Fairy Terns x 3



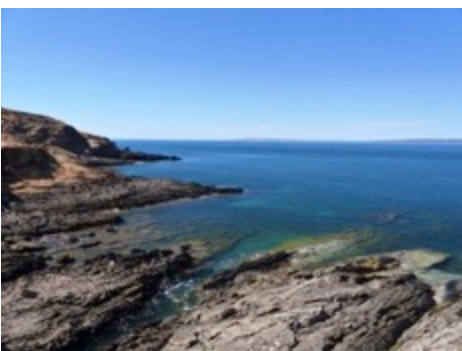


Newland Head CP
Parson's Beach x 3

Deep Creek CP
Waterfall (right)
Blowhole Beach x 2

Victor Harbor sunset

*Thank you Johannes!
Holidays are on hold at present so it
was great sharing yours.*

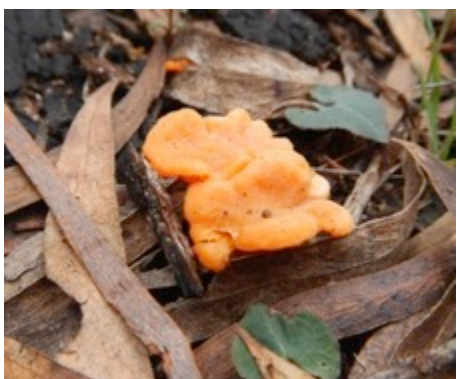
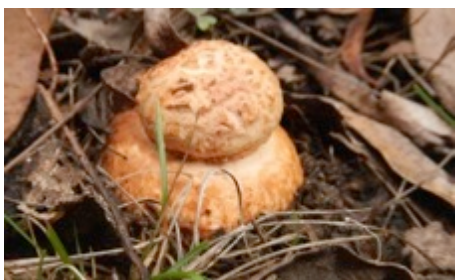
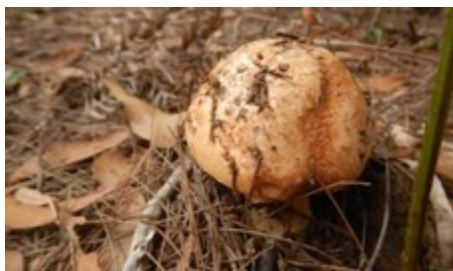


Tasmanian Fungi from Rhondda Tomlinson

Rhondda has managed to identify some of this great collection found in Henry Somerset Reserve. Fungi are hard to identify and it is important to record the many features including the form, underside, stalk or stipe and whether it has an annulus around the stipe where a veil was attached, etc.. Aren't the variety of colours and shapes of these amazing?



Cortinarius archeri



Entoloma sp.

Entoloma sp. (underside)



Ramaria sp.

Hebeloma aff. *crustuliniforme*

Gymnopilus allantopus

NOT “THE BIG FIVE”

African Animals by Jenny Purdie ... Part 2

The “Big Five” animals (Lion, Leopard, Black Rhinoceros, Elephant and African Buffalo) were those known to the early big-game hunters as the five most difficult animals in Africa to hunt on foot. Visitors, especially first timers, to Africa always want to see these iconic species. These animals are certainly wonderful to see and watch however there are many lesser-known species that are also fascinating.



CARNIVORES: African carnivores we encountered last year were Black-backed Jackals, Honeybadger, Mongooses, Hyenas and the cats – Lions, Leopard and Cheetah. Spotted Hyenas (picture left) are often maligned for being scavengers but are more successful hunters than Lions, however they will scavenge given the opportunity as indeed Lions do. Although Cheetahs are very fast they lose a lot of their kills to the bigger predators and in some places such as Namibia, survive better outside national parks where they are unlikely to lose their kills; they are also not genetically diverse so are vulnerable to diseases. Honey Badgers have a fearsome reputation and will scavenge food from larger animals. Jackals can also be seen stealing food from larger predators by nipping into a carcass and grabbing a mouthful before retreating.



Yellow Mongoose



Dwarf Mongoose



Banded Mongoose



Black-backed Jackal



Cheetah



Honey Badger



REPTILES:

There are more than 400 species of reptiles in southern Africa (the NT has 300+ and Australia 860) with approximately half being endemic. Our poor photo of the Chameleon (left) was taken in Zambia on a night drive and skilfully spotted by our Zambian driver, as was the Puff Adder(right).

Chameleons are considered to be bad omens by the locals and are thought to be poisonous; they are distrusted because of their ability to change colour and also because they can independently swivel their protruding eyes.



The Leopard Tortoise (right) is the only Tortoise species with the ability to swim. Despite their thick shell they are preyed upon by a variety of animals – Leopards, Hyenas, Monitor Lizards, Ground Hornbills and humans.



The Nile Crocodile is smaller than our saltwater crocodile but males can still reach a length of 5 metres and a weight of 750kg. Although they can survive in saltwater they mostly live in freshwater rivers, waterholes. They are locally known as “flat dogs” and certainly seem closer to the ground than our crocs!



Agama Lizard



Black Girdled Lizard



Etosha Ground Agama



Flat Lizard



Rainbow Skink



Tree Agama



Nile Crocodile



Terrapin



An unidentified snake



Join Bush Blitz scientists on a virtual expedition!

For the last decade, Bush Blitz, Australia's largest nature discovery program has taken taxonomists to remote parts of the country to document plants and animals. This program is a partnership between the Australian Government, Parks Australia (through the Australian Biological Resources Study), BHP and Earthwatch Australia.

Bush Blitz participants have helped to discover more than 1700 new species and made thousands of species records. There are an estimated 580,000–680,000 species in Australia but three quarters of this biodiversity is yet to be identified and scientifically described.

With species discovery expeditions currently on hold due to the pandemic, the Bush Blitz team has organised a virtual expedition. The Backyard Species

Discovery project encourages all Australians to contribute to our knowledge of Australian biodiversity while practising their social distancing.

We can't promise you'll find a new species but this is a great way to make a valuable contribution to science and brush up on your ID skills with the help of Bush Blitz scientists. All you need is a digital camera and internet access - the Bush Blitz team will guide you through the rest. For more information about Bush Blitz, and how to join this virtual expedition, visit the Bush Blitz website <https://bushblitz.org.au/introducing-an-expedition-for-everyone/>.

Treasurer's Report for April 2020

Balance of all funds (inc. petty cash) end of March	\$2,268.01
Activity in April	
<u>Income received</u>	
Membership	\$0.00
Bank interest	\$0.17
<u>Expenses</u>	
Australia Post PO Box renewal – reimburse B. Gilfedder	\$134.00
ANH Medallion donation	\$100.00
<u>[Petty cash</u>	
Petty cash opening and closing balance (no activity)	\$21.85]
Total of all funds (inc. petty cash) end April	\$2,034.18



Monsieur Gaudichaud-Beaupre - Barb Gilfedder

I was intrigued by the strange name *Ptilotus gaudichaudii* (pictured below). When I started looking, I found lots of other species with the same name – plants *Senna gaudichaudi*, *Grevillea gaudichaudii*, *Galium gaudichaudii*, *Tecoma gaudichaudi* and some marine animals *Themisto gaudichaudii* a crustacean, *Ocypode gaudichaudii* a painted ghost-crab, *Desmonema gaudichaudi* a spotted jellyfish, a worm *Hipponoe gaudichaudi*, a pelagic snail *Atlanta gaudichaudi*, an insect *Phalangopis gaudichaudi*, and 2 reptiles - a South American gecko *Garthis gaudichaudii* and a lizard *Ecleopos gaudichaudi*, and a bird in New Guinea *Sauomartpis gaudichaudi*.

I concluded that this person must have done a lot of collecting in many different places.

Peter Jobson gave me a good reference to him from Wikipedia
“Charles Gaudichaud-Beaupré (1789 – 1854) was a French botanist.
He studied pharmacology at Cognac and Angoulême. He also studied chemistry and herbology.

His greatest claim to fame was serving as botanist on a circumglobal expedition from 1817 to 1820. He accompanied Freycinet, who made the expedition on the ships Uranie and Physicienne. He is known for his collections in Australia. In 1831 Gaudichaud sailed on L'Herminie to South America, visiting Chile, Brazil and Peru. In 1836 he undertook a third voyage, circumnavigating the globe on La Bonite.”

Charles Gaudichaud-Beaupre collected the type specimen of *Ptilotus gaudichaudii* (not called that then) in 1818 at Baie de Chiens Marins, now called Shark Bay. Its distribution is across all Australian mainland states except Victoria.

