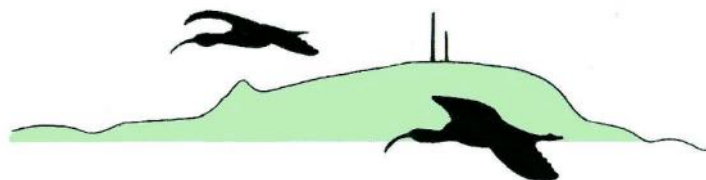


ORANGE FIELD NATURALIST AND CONSERVATION SOCIETY Inc



NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2024

Next Talk

Thursday 8 August – 7.30pm
Conmurra Wildlife Sanctuary and its fauna
Speaker Joel Little

Committee Meeting – 6.30pm

Face to face at Nguluway Ngurang Senior
Citizens Centre North Room
(Opposite side of carpark to Harris Farm)

Excursion

Sunday 11 August
**Sunset walk at Conmurra Wildlife
Sanctuary**
Leave Orange at 3pm. Travel arrangements
organised on Thursday night or by email.

Next Meeting

**Thursday 8 August - Conmurra Wildlife
Sanctuary and its fauna.**
Speaker – Joel Little.

Andrea and Joel Little came to 'Conmurra' in 2013 to raise a family in the beautiful Aussie bush. It has become so much more than that for them and is now a wildlife sanctuary. Joel will talk about the development of the sanctuary and its fauna.



Rufous Bettongs can be seen at Conmurra.
Used with permission from
<https://www.conmurra.com.au/wildlife-sanctuary>

In January 2020, they received approval to create a wildlife sanctuary for endangered native Australian animals such as Bettongs, Potoroos and Bandicoots. They breed dingoes - Kimba and Kela - who are now part of their family, and the puppies go to other wildlife sanctuaries to help preserve the species.



A long-nosed Potoroo can be seen at Conmurra. Used with permission from
<https://www.conmurra.com.au/wildlife-sanctuary>

**Next Excursion – Sunday 11 August, 5pm -
Sunset walk at Conmurra Wildlife
Sanctuary.** On this guided easy walk you may see endangered animals such as Bettongs, Parma Wallabies or a glimpse of the elusive Rock-wallaby. The walk will start at 5.30 pm and last about an hour.

The sanctuary is at 49 Timber Ridge Rd, Walang, 21km east of Bathurst. Travel arrangements will be worked out at the Thursday night talk. If not staying at Conmurra the drive back to Orange will be in the dark.

Bring any food and drink you would need, including your dinner if you wish to sit around after the walk. Bring a chair and wear sturdy shoes and clothes suitable for cold weather.

If you wish to stay at Conmurra you can book at <https://www.conmurra.com.au/>

Last Talk – Thursday 13 June
Spice, trade and botanicals: A tour of the Malabar Coast, India.

Speaker - Murray Fletcher.

Report by Rosemary Stapleton with additions by Murray Fletcher. Indian photos Murray Fletcher and Vicki Glover.

Anticipation for Murray's talk on India was heightened by the platters of pakoras and samosas that Vicki brought along. They were very much appreciated on a winters night and added some extra spice and heat to the talk.



*Vicki sharing flavours of India.
Photo Jenny Pratten.*

Murray took us on their tour to the Malabar Coast (below) that he and Vicki enjoyed 12 months ago. In this south-western corner of India, they visited the hot and humid coastal plains and enjoyed the cooler climate (2200m a.s.l.) of the Nilgiri Plateau at Ooty.



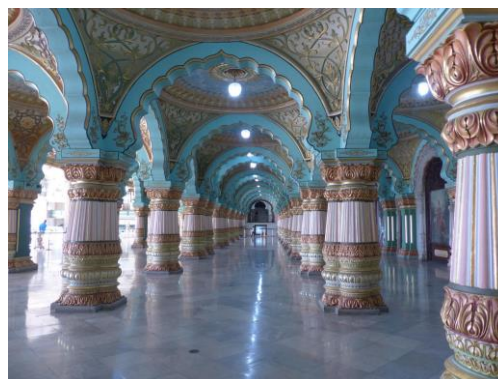
Despite India having a population of 1.4 billion people there was little evidence in Murray and Vicki's photos of what perhaps we would expect to see in India. They travelled to national parks, tea plantations, forests, rivers and large botanic gardens. The Lalbagh

Botanic Gardens covered ~100ha (compared to 17ha in Orange) and the Ooty Gardens claimed to be one of the oldest heritage gardens in the world. In any wilderness area a guide was needed due to wild animals such as tigers and leopards.



Two Gaur (Indian Bison) in a tea plantation.

Along their route the rich history of the country was seen as they visited historic buildings, temples and even stayed in palaces. Many of the gardens and natural places as well as the magnificent buildings were the legacy of the Maharajas, the Hindu monarchs and elite. Mysore Palace, the second most visited building in India, was stunning.



Mysore Palace archways.

Prince Charles, their local organiser, ensured they experienced the many modes of transport used in India from horse and carriage, bicycle rickshaws, tuk-tuks, trains, cars and boats. The main religion is Hinduism and as a revered animal there were cows wandering everywhere, often in unexpected places.



An ironically black and white cow inspecting a market stall selling paint powders.

Along the way they met inspiring people at universities and other institutions undertaking botanical research. This included the Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions where they were correlating the plant names from the 500 Indian languages to what their uses were. The next step was for the active ingredients to be identified. In Mysuru, there was a visit to B.V. Pundit's Ayurvedic Medicine factory which manufactures botanical oils and medicines from local plants. An example was *Ixora coccinea* (below) a plant whose roots are used as a treatment for intestinal problems; a 'true bowel modifier'!



Another inspiring visit was to Upstream Ecology where ecologist Godwin Bosco's dream is to revegetate, in his lifetime, 30% of the Nilgiri Plateau with endemic native vegetation. One of his challenges was propagating a *Strobilanthes* sp. (Gold Kuringi) which lives for a set number of years before flowering once and then dying.

The wildlife varied from the Gaur (Indian Bison) to Rhesus Macaques, Asian Elephants in the wild and even an Indian Giant Squirrel (below) which was similar in size to a Tree Kangaroo.

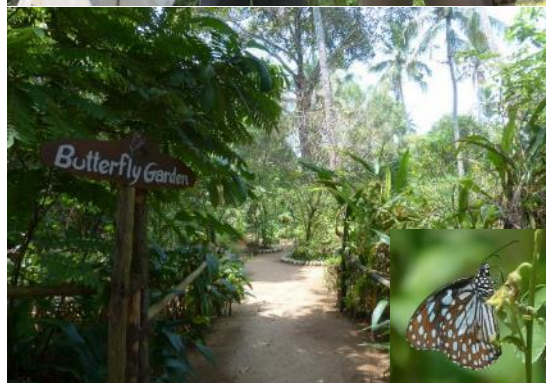


Along the way they enjoyed fabulous Indian cuisine and a visit to a famous spice garden

which was featured in Monty Don's *Around the World in 80 Gardens*. Other highlights were visits to local markets (below) where spices, vegetables, cut flowers and colourful paint powders were sold.



They ended their tour with a two-night extension on the coast at Marari Beach Resort. It is a biodiversity sanctuary where they joined the resort's environmental officer Shibu Bhaskar on bird walks and a visit to the butterfly garden.



Vicki, Shibu and Murray in the Butterfly Garden. Inset is a Blue Tiger Butterfly.

Shibu also invited them back to his home to see his local birds. These included Black-rumped flamebacks (a woodpecker), Rufous treepie, Jungle owlet, Oriental magpie robins and Jungle babblers. Seeing Common Mynas in their natural habitat brought out interesting emotions, considering it is such an avian weed here in Australia.



A female Black-rumped flameback in Shibu's front garden.

Despite the heat and humidity Murray and Vicki obviously enjoyed their trip. Jenny Medd said she found it 'a most entertaining talk - a lovely blend of tourist stuff, with plenty of both natural history and historical background, presented with Murray's quirky humour'.

Geoff thanked them for taking us to different climes and cultures on a cold night in Orange.

Last Excursion – Sunday 14 July Cookamidgera Precinct of the South West Woodlands Nature Reserve.

Report by Dick Medd.

An hour and a half drive west of Orange saw nine of us at South West Woodlands Nature Reserve, Cookamidgera Precinct, on a bleak and foggy winter's day. It would have been worse had we stayed in Orange!

After an acknowledgement to country and a brief overview of the reserve we ventured anticlockwise around the northern half along the Springwood Fire Trail. The reserve, being one of several previous State Forests scattered throughout SW NSW, now forming the Nature Reserve collective, had been logged in the past; probably worked for Ironbark railway sleepers and Cypress timbers for construction. Apart from some litter from past logging camps and local dumping, some Prickly Pear and Horehound near the entrance, what we saw of the woodland is in reasonably good condition, as remnants go. However, feral pigs and goats are definitely doing damage.

After a brief stop to admire a bracket fungus spotted high up in a tree and a quick look around for shrubs and birds, we moved on to a rocky ridge for a better scout around. The fractured fine-grained sandstone/siltstone rocks (infused with quartz), prevailed on the ridges throughout the reserve. This outcrop

supported abundant *Dillwynia sieberi* and occasional *Cryptandra amara* in near full flower among the dominant *Stypandra glauca* and *Acacia paradoxa*, both with the odd first flowers on show.



Dillwynia sieberi. Photo R Stapleton.

The scouts spotted leaves of several orchid species and the very first flowers of *Diplodium nana*, while Dick, with NPWS approval, collected a few moss samples for Alison to identify. No bryophytes have been recorded for the reserve!



Fallen flowers of Melichrus erubescens and one of the moss species seen and collected for Alison. Photo R Stapleton.

A bit further west we stopped for lunch, a group photo, then folk fanned out again. Our forward scout Tracee spotted seedlings of what we think is Gargaloo (*Parsonia eucalyptophylla*) in another rock outcrop, along with a different moss for collection. Rosemary has perfected the ability to differentiate moss forms from several metres away (through her binoculars!).



Above – Tracee Burke and Dick Medd at the rock outcrop checking out the Gargaloo (*Parsonsia eucalyptophylla*).
Photo R Stapleton.



Left – one of the Gargaloo seedlings climbing up the rock. Photo T Burke.

An old low tree of Sweet Quandong or Native Peach (*Santalum acuminatum*) laden in fruits also supported bunches of Mistletoe (probably the widespread *Amyema quandang*, which is parasitic on many species of *Acacia* as well). Helmut and Nigel tried to outdo each other with their long lenses, eager to capture the flitting flocks of Spotted Pardalotes. The lack of understory vegetation at this location brought home the overgrazing damage caused by goats, and the stymieing of regeneration.



A Musk Lorikeet enjoying the eucalypt blossoms. Photo Nigel Hobden.

Other birds recorded by Rosemary other others included Galah, White-throated Treecreeper, Noisy Friarbird, White-naped Honeyeater, Red Wattlebird, White-plumed Honeyeater, White-eared Honeyeater, Noisy Miner, Striated Pardalote, White-browed Babbler, Grey Shrike-thrush, Australian Magpie, Grey

Fantail, Silvereye, Crow & Raven spp., Laughing Kookaburra, Eastern Rosella, and White-winged Chough. No doubt many found the flowering Ironbarks appealing.

As time crept on and rain threatened, we had no time to explore much more. Eagle-eyed Tracee was captivated by a giant hollow in one of the few remaining old growth Ironbarks in the reserve, necessitating a photo opportunity. Then Nigel spotted a lone shrub of *Hovea rosmarinifolia* in full flower, which Dick and Tracee completely whizzed by and missed, even though Dick had flagged it as a must spot for the day! So, Dick and Tracee just had to double back ... and Tracee, who rarely gets to join us on excursions, commented "I really enjoyed the trip to this reserve and the highlight would have been seeing a *Hovea rosmarinifolia*. It is a stunning plant which is apparently not very common around here anymore. So, to see a lone plant in full bloom was pretty special".



Hovea rosmarinifolia in full flower.
Photo Nigel Hobden.

A brief stop followed to admire the impressive creek erosion remediation work before heading to the last rock outcrop with a very old Wonga Wonga Vine in full bloom. Orchid leaves and mosses spotted there just a week before had been ploughed out by pigs. Steady rain setting in brought a halt to our proceedings. Thanks to NPWS and Ranger Jen Dodson for approving the excursion and for making the locked reserve accessible.



The beautiful detail of Wonga Wonga Vine flowers. Photo Tracee Burke.

OFNCS Committee News

Welcome to new member Rebecca Vere.

Orange Field Naturalist and Conservation Society was formed on 23rd October 1974. The committee has agreed to hold an anniversary dinner. Jenny Pratten has investigated venues, and it will be a seated dinner at Groundstone on the evening of Friday 1 November. We will also mark the anniversary at the November excursion (Sunday 17) which will be to Gaanha bula Mt Canobolas.

Details will be confirmed in future newsletters.

Work on a “50th Anniversary History” book is progressing steadily, however, we’ve identified an issue with the resolution of photographs, especially the old ones, but also many shared as low-resolution images on email etc. **PLEASE, if you have photographs in your collections that you are willing to share, could you send copies URGENTLY to Jenny (jennymedd@yahoo.com.au) or email her to double-check what is required.** They should ideally be your originals (at least 1MB or 300dpi). Contributions are all acknowledged and will be copyrighted in the publication.

If anyone has high-quality print photographs that they cannot scan themselves, it may be possible to organise assistance. Again, please contact Jenny Medd.

September Talk and Excursion

Talk – Thursday 12 September – Managing Biosecurity and Emerging Threats. Dr John Tracey, Deputy Director General, Biosecurity and Food Safety, NSW DPI.

Excursion – Sunday 15 September – Barton Nature Reserve, an enclosed NPWS reserve west of Orange.

Please note for excursions:

- participants must arrive at the meeting place at the designated time.
- alternative meeting places can be arranged, with a set time of arrival.
- no arrangements will be made for late arrivals.

News from the Nangar NP Excursion

Alison Downing has completed her identification of the bryophyte samples that she collected in Nangar. She has identified 29 species of mosses, four liverworts plus more that she might be able to put names on when those she has placed in a hothouse eventually produce spores. A sample of a hornwort was also collected. Prior to Alison’s visit there were only a small number of bryophyte species on the list for the park. There may also be a few more liverwort species identified from the samples collected by Dick Medd the following week, with NPWS permission, and sent to Dr Chris Cargill.

When sending these results through Alison commented ‘*it is really quite impressive, especially given we didn’t have a lot of time*’. We look forward to continuing this positive partnership with Alison.

In the July Creature of the Month Alison wrote about the *Fossombronia* liverwort having crimson rhizoids. Her photo below shows what they look like under a microscope.



Gaanha bula Mt Canobolas Update

The mountain has been blanketed in snow. Many people visited even when the roads were closed. It was popular with families and people who had never see snow before such as the family from Ghana that I met.



A cold and foggy day on the summit of Gaanhabula Mt Canobolas. Photo R Stapleton.

Unfortunately, if you visit the picnic areas and trails you will see serious damage from feral pigs. This is a major problem especially for species such as orchids.

Spring Creek Reservoir Quarterly Survey,
Sunday 21 July. Report and photo R Stapleton.

I was counting down as I left the garage at 8.30 am to head out to Spring Creek Reservoir for the quarterly bird survey. Six, five then four degrees! How crazy were Nick and new member Rebecca to meet me there. I was thinking of Cilla and imagined that she would be enjoying her northern summer somewhere.

The three of us braved the strong freezing wind and overcast skies, although these were better than on Saturday when it was also wet and sleety. The recent rain has made the water level in the reservoir very high. Our first look across the water showed few birds close to the eastern shore where water weed had been washed against the bank along with white bubbles from the choppy conditions. At one sheltered spot Rebecca noticed some Superb Fairywrens walking on the foam and pecking off what we thought might be insects.

In the distance were some rafts of mixed species, mainly Coots with Hoary-headed and Australasian Grebes. It was pleasing to see six Blue-billed Ducks, including two males, a few Hardheads and some Greater Crested Grebes who were hunkered down with their heads tucked low to avoid the wind. Other than the call of a Magpie and a fly over of six Crimson Rosellas we didn't see any land birds for 500m when 18 Red-browed Finches flew past.

It was a popular morning for dog walkers. A couple had spotted an injured large bird perching just above the water. Sadly, we couldn't spot it again to identify or rescue it.

Our pace was quicker than usual as we saw only occasional Superb Fairywrens and a few Scrubwrens but no honeyeaters, whistlers, Willie Wagtails, thornbills, or robins. The aim was to get to the dam wall and return to the warmth of our cars as quickly as possible. We were thankful for the protection afforded by the willows along the track and did not stay long looking at the dam wall as the wind was so cold it chilled our faces.

Two Whistling Kites were seen; one perched in the dying pine on the edge of the clump of pines where we suspect they nest. The only other raptor was a Black-shouldered Kite hovering over a grassy paddock. Perhaps the birding highlight of the survey was a flock of about 80 Little Black Cormorants slowly circling overhead when we were near the dam wall. The other highlight was spotting three Rakali sitting on branches just out of the water. This showed us their orange sides which are not usually seen when they are swimming.



Looking south across the reservoir from near the entrance gate on a very bleak day.

Our total count was 30 bird species which included six species of duck and three species of grebes. This total was a little lower than other surveys but perhaps some of the birds were being more sensible than we were.

Australia's Grassland Earless Dragons

Report by Rosemary Stapleton with additions from Tony Caine.

On July 10 U3A, Field Nats and Orange Council partnered for a talk on the Grassland Earless Dragons by Dr Jane Melville, from the Museum of Victoria. Quite a crowd came to hear how Jane had studied the Earless Dragons in locations right across the country. With

advancements in DNA analysis, she had discovered that Australia did not have just one species of dragons but many species. These dragons are found in native grassland where they live in burrows in the soil, often made by Wolf Spiders. Sadly, like many other species they are being threatened as only 2% of their pre-colonisation habitat remains, largely due to the agricultural use of grasslands. In some locations grazing is used occasionally to manage the type and density of grasses and other plants.

Jane, a taxonomist and conservation biologist, related how she has taken tiny samples for DNA analysis from museum specimens, live dragons and even one that had been kept in a freezer for 20 years. Through her work Jane found that there were in fact many species of Earless Dragons. One was the Victorian Grassland Earless Dragon. It was thought to be extinct but was rediscovered in 2023 on lightly grazed farmland west of Melbourne that was subject to a development application. This was significant as their habitat can now be managed appropriately, and Melbourne Zoo has commenced a successful breeding program.



Dr Jane Melville speaking about the Bathurst Earless Dragon. Photo Tony Caine.

The story is not so positive for the Critically Endangered Bathurst Grassland Earless Dragon which has not been seen for over 20 years. They are restricted to the open grassland country around Bathurst and in the past have been found on Wahluu Mt Panorama. As they live in burrows and are quite tiny, with a head and body length of around 7cm, they are hard to find. Jane encouraged everyone to get to know the type of grassland where the dragons live and to look for them. More information on the Bathurst Grassland Earless Dragon is at <https://threatenedspecies.bionet.nsw.gov.au/profile?id=20379>

Jane has written a book on these reptiles - <https://museums victoria.com.au/publications/science/dragon-lizards-of-australia>.

As Tony Caine said when thanking Jane *‘those present were inspired by Jane’s talk and the extinction fighting work she is doing with the museum and associated agencies, such as Landcare and Field Nats groups’*.

Thanks also go to Tony and Penny for organising and publicising Jane’s talk.

Dates for your Diary

2024 Cowra Woodland Bird Surveys – the last dates for this year are October 19/20. Contact **Jayden Gunn** for more information or to register for the surveying at jayden.gunn@birdlife.org.au

Dubbo Field Naturalist and Conservation Society - Tuesday 17 September at 7pm Col Bower will be speaking on ‘Orchids of Central Western NSW’ in Dubbo. DFN hopes to visit Orange the following Sunday, 22 September, to look at orchid locations around Orange.

Biodiversity Month is September.

Central Tablelands LLS are again organising activities for Biodiversity Month. Field Nats is involved in some of the activities with ECCO and Orange Council. **Backyard Biodiversity** is on **1 September** at the Botanic Gardens. **Spotlighting** nights are planned for **6 and 20 September**, with one at the Botanic Gardens and the other at Gosling Creek/Hinton Reserves.

CW Landcare are organising a **Bioblitz** on **21 September** at Lake Canobolas.

Details and registration for these and other activities are available at the [CT LLS website](#).



Nature Conservation Council
The voice for nature in NSW

Picnic for Nature – Saturday 19 October

Once again ECCO and Orange Field Nats are joining to celebrate nature as part of this initiative of the Nature Conservation Council.

Details will be circulated in coming weeks.

Sightings around Orange

If you see anything interesting, please email orangefieldnats@gmail.com or post it on Facebook.

Things with Wings

A **Flame Robin** was photographed by Michael Pratten at "Koolewong" Borenore (not arboretum) on 23 June.



Mixed sex groups of 7 and 5 **Flame Robins** were seen at 2 locations on Gem Road just west of Cowra on the Woodland Bird survey weekend on 27/28 July. When driving to and from sites, surveyors at Cowra also saw larger numbers than usual of **Black-shouldered Kites** and **Jacky Winters**.

About a dozen **Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos** were seen feeding on Hakea seeds at Ploughmans Wetland on 6 July by Libby Jones.

When driving back from the Cookamidgera excursion Bruce Hansen saw three quail, probably **Brown Quail**, a bit past The Monument near Cudal.

Nigel Sethack saw and photographed (below) this **Little Eagle** being harassed by **Magpies** at Spring Creek Reservoir on 18 July.



On 28 July over **150 Plumed Whistling Ducks** were roosting along the edge of the western

pond of Canowindra Sewage Treatment Works and seen by Rosemary Stapleton.

Orchids

Nigel and Rosemary called in to the Bumberry section of Goobang NP on the way back from Cookamidgera on 14 July. Nigel spotted a flower spike of **Bunochilus stenosepalus**, the **Leafy Greenhood**. There were several rosettes nearby that were not typical of other Greenhoods, so we thought they were a different type of plant. On reading the orchid book we realized that these rosettes may have been the Greenhoods. We asked for clarification from the experts and Col replied that *'the rosettes are most likely plants of the same species. The Leafy Greenhoods are interesting in that the leaves of flowering and non-flowering plants are different. Flowering plants lack a rosette and have leaves on the stem. Non-flowering plants have elevated rosettes.'*



The Leafy Greenhood flower spike (photo Nigel Hobden) and elevated rosette (photo Rosemary Stapleton).

Col also commented that *'With all the rain we have been having, it looks like we are in for another bumper orchid (and bluebell) season'.*

And Rosemary agrees as there were lots of different orchid leaves at some of the bird survey sites at Cowra on the weekend. At Fiona Lumsden and John French's bush block, east of Koorawatha, it was hard to walk around without stepping on orchid leaves of different shapes and sizes. Fiona had found flowers of *Bunochilus stenosepalus*, *Acianthus collinus* (Inland Mosquito-orchid) and just opening *Corybas incurvus* (Slaty Helmet Orchid). Their

property is an orchid hotspot as they have found 32 orchid species there. This included the realization that they had seen *Thelymitra rubra*, the Salmon Sun Orchid, which is one of the most northern sightings of the species.



A Slaty Helmut Orchid with a partially opened flower. Photo David Marquard.

Creature of the Month

Two fungi - Cannonball Fungus (*Sphaerobolus stellatus*) and the Common Prettymouth (*Calostoma sp.*)

Report by Nigel Hobden.

This month we will look at two slightly unusual and less common fungi, both of which have been recorded this year on Gaanha Bula Mt Canobolas for the first time. During July Hai was out walking on the mountain with a couple of members of the Orange Bushwalking Club in the valley above Federal Falls. Whilst making their way through thick vegetative regrowth from the 2018 fire, they observed the Common Prettymouth (*Calostoma sp.*) growing at the base of Stringybark (*Eucalyptus macrorhyncha*).



The Common Prettymouth (*Calostoma sp.*). Photo Nigel Hobden.

Hai was keen to show me the fungus, and I was just as keen to see it, so we met late one afternoon. We walked down the southern branch of the Federal Falls walking track, using the newly constructed stairs, and whilst on the way down stopped at a large fallen tree that had a yellow 'flower bud' or cup shaped growth emanating from the aged timber. We had found Cannonball Fungus (*Sphaerobolus stellatus*).

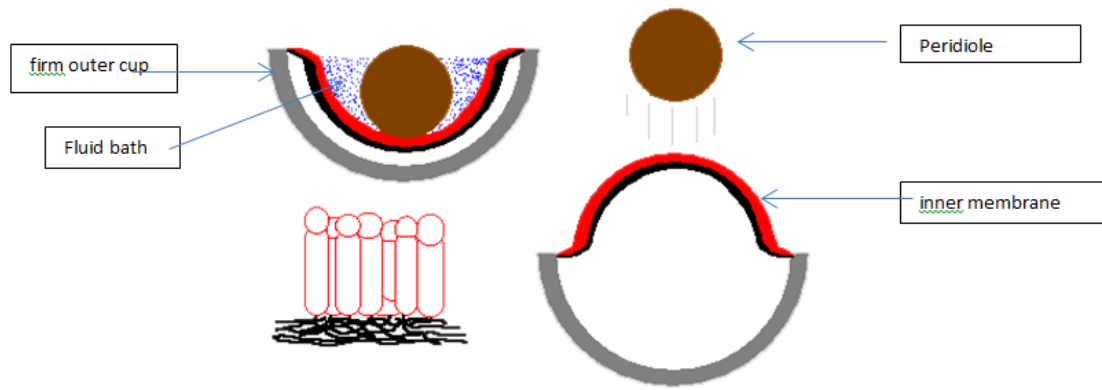


Close up of the tiny Cannonball Fungus (*Sphaerobolus stellatus*). Photo Hai Wu.

The first fungus to be described below is the Cannonball Fungus (*Sphaerobolus stellatus*). The Australian National Botanical Gardens website provides the following details <https://www.anbg.gov.au/fungi/birds-nest-cannonball.htm>

As the name suggests this fungus has an active mechanism for spore distribution. When young the fruiting bodies are spherical and as they mature, they open from the apex into a cup or flower bud shape with toothed margins. Within the firm outer casing of the spherical shape, which is approximately 2 millimetres in diameter, is an inner membrane. This has a single reddish-brown peridiole sitting on that membrane. The membrane is attached to the outer cup at the tips of the teeth mentioned above. Within the cup, the peridiole sits in a bath of fluid.

“When the fruiting body is mature the inner membrane turns inside out and flicks the peridiole into the air. The process is shown in the diagram (below), where there is a grey outer cup, red-black inner membrane and dark brown peridiole. The blue dots represent the fluid bath. The fluid in which the peridiole sits acts as a lubricating fluid. It keeps the peridiole loose in the cup, so that it is very easy to flick away.”



The force of ejection is sufficient to shoot the peridiole up to 6 metres away – hence the common name of this fungus being Cannonball Fungus. The *Sphaerobolus* peridiole is fairly soft. It is composed largely of fatty materials. It compresses when it hits a solid object and stays firmly stuck.

Left – the round milky peridioles emerging from the outer cup. Photo Hai Wu.

Lucid Central, www.lucidcentral.org, provides the following details of the *Calostroma* fungus (see image below. Photo Nigel Hobden). *Calostroma fuscum* belongs to a group of ornamented, stalked puffball fungi commonly referred to as ‘pretty mouths’. The entire fungus takes the form of a small ball-shaped sack (a peridium) on a curiously twisted gelatinous stem. The apex of the cap is protected in young specimens by a skull cap-like structure (the exoperidium) that falls off at maturity to reveal the red ornamented pore through which its powdery spores are released. The cap is smooth on the inside but marked right at the inner top by a reddish star. This star centres on the opening (stoma) of the middle layer of the peridium (the mesoperidium) through which the spores escape.

Calostroma fuscum prefers to fruit in moist shady positions in deep litter and mixed debris at the base of Eucalyptus trees and rainforest species in wet sclerophyll forests. The species appears to be widespread and common. However, it is easily overlooked, especially when the bright red star-shaped structure has faded. Sometimes old specimens may be found with a white, papery membrane partially ejected out of the stoma



Other species of *Calostroma* are more common on sandy soils in woodland or coastal heath and may have different coloured pores or ‘mouths’ on the apex of their caps. *C. fuscum* is the only *Calostroma* species which has a detachable hemispherical cap that comes away in one piece. Note the discarded cap of this puffball in the photograph above.

Samples of both fungi were collected under Jordan Bailey's DPI license and provided to her for the Forest Road fungi collection.



Lunch on the Springwood Fire Trail in the Cookamidgera Precinct.

Left to right – Jane Paul, Rosemary Stapleton, Bruce Hansen, Helmut Berndt, Peter Toedter, Hai Wu, Nigel Hobden and Dick Medd. Photo Tracee Burke.

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Please identify payments with your name and send confirmation of the payment to
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Orange Field Naturalist & Conservation Society acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, including the people of the Wiradjuri Nation, and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

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