



Report for June Weeding Activity

A handful of regulars appeared for the working-bee and we spent the time in the north-west corner (sector D) where the ground cover was relatively bare (so that our feet wouldn't get wet from any long grass). We tackled mostly seedlings of sweet pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*) and common ivy (*Hedera helix*) as well as some asparagus fern (*Asparagus scandens*) that we had missed on a couple of dedicated visits previously. We have had a fair bit of this climber in the north-west of the reserve but hopefully have it under enough control now to stop it becoming a major problem.

These asparagus ferns are native to South Africa and climb up any sticks and eventually entirely smother an area. From a single base they form numerous long, tough stems that most readily break off near the base so the plants cannot normally just be pulled out of the ground. Removal is best performed by digging up their tuber bunch, which can become quite a large clump for old individuals.

They mostly flower in late spring to early summer and form small, red berries that are distributed by birds.

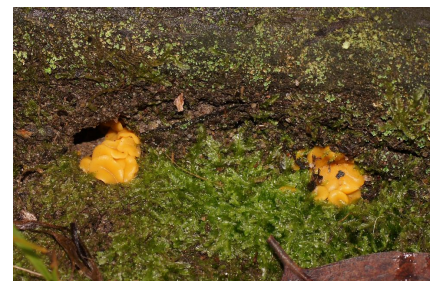


Asparagus scandens

June Fungus

Autumn is the peak season for fungus in Victoria and once again we encountered a fair number of species during the weeding session.

A fairly common species is *Phaeohelotium baileyana*, often called *Discinella terrestris* in field guides. These are bright yellow discs, typically 5–10 mm in diameter, undulating from being tightly packed in small groups on the ground, often wedged between roots and among moss.



Phaeohelotium baileyana
(*Discinella terrestris*)



Cheilymenia cf coprinaria

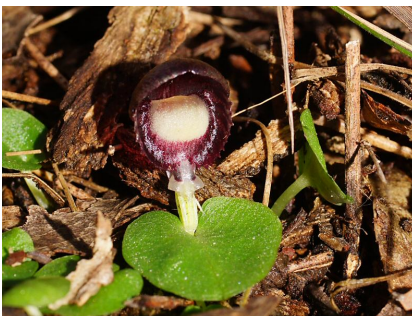
These are tiny, orange cups typically 1–2mm across that grow on herbivore dung. Although almost too small to see with the naked eye, the edge of each cup is lined with tiny hairs. Individual species are difficult to tell apart and require microscopic examination to distinguish between them.

July Weeding and Orchid Report

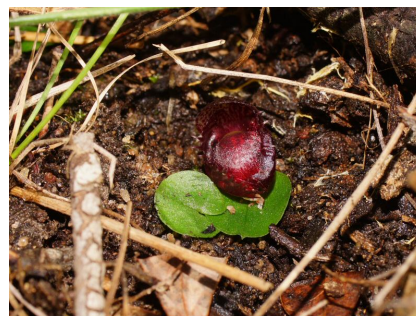
Perhaps because of the winter chills and a terrible weather forecast (that proved wrong), one of the smallest groups in a while turned up. We did some vegetation management along the Orchid Road loop, including removing a lot of flatweed *Hypochaeris radicata*.

We saw some greenhoods flowering around the Orchid Rd loop but in the late morning at the end of our weeding two of us travelled around the centre of the reserve to see what else was out. All up we saw the following seven species in flower. I've used the names from Wild Orchids of Victoria Australia, Jeanes & Backhouse, 2006.

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Corybas diemenicus</i>	stately helmet-orchid
<i>Corybas fimbriatus</i>	fringed helmet-orchid
<i>Corybas unguiculatus</i>	small helmet-orchid
<i>Cyrtostylis reniformis</i>	small gnat-orchid
<i>Pterostylis grandiflora</i>	cobra greenhood
<i>Pterostylis melagramma</i>	tall greenhood
<i>Pterostylis nutans</i>	nodding greenhood



Corybas diemenicus



Corybas fimbriatus



Corybas unguiculatus

Pterostylis grandiflora was already flowering reasonably well in June and that was also the best time for the *Corybas unguiculatus*. Looking closely at that picture of the helmet-orchid you will see it is starting to collapse. A couple of metres away there were two finished flowers developing nice seed-pods.

Fluorescent Yellow Lichen

During the morning we also observed this bright yellow lichen on the bark of a living stringybark. It is quite common on logs and tree trunks, particularly those of gum trees. It forms little more than a featureless, rough crust, even when viewed at a little magnification like in this macro photo.

Thanks to Ken Harris for identifying this on BowerBird:
<http://www.bowerbird.org.au/observations/68252>



Chrysothrix candelaris

Coming Up for 2016

Date & Time	Activity
Mon 15 August 1:00PM	Planning meeting with Parks Victoria at their Lysterfield office.
Sat 27 August 9:00AM	Regular working bee. Meet in Orchid Rd car park as usual.
Sat 24 September 9:00AM	Regular working bee.

Acacia myrtifolia has started to flower in the reserve and, in the lead up to spring, several other species will also bloom, blanketing the bush with yellow balls of fluff. At the end of August we should also see the first spider-orchids, a sure sign of the most abundant wildflower season of the year.