

The Hamer Newsletter



15 December 2016

Hello to One and All,

When we left Bindoon in early September we thought that Spring had finally arrived in Western Australia after a very long, cold and wet Winter. We had a few sunny and slightly warmer days but it soon went back to being cool and damp.

We started heading south, still following the flowers and finding more orchids, revisiting some places we saw 5 years ago and finding some new places to explore.

9 – 19 September

We stayed at York, and had lunch with friends Dawn and Ray who drove out from Perth to see us. It was good to see them after 5 years. We



also went to Kwolyin then headed down to Gnaala Mia in the Dryandra Woodlands near Narrogin for some more orchid hunting. It was very cool and damp much of the time and there were very few other campers around. Then we headed to Bridgetown via Boddington and Collie.

In Bridgetown, we parked in the drive way of friends Richard

and Dianne. Again, it was good to catch up with our friends from 5 years ago and they showed us around their lovely district and we did the Abattoir walk to see the many orchids growing there.

22 September

We packed up in the rain and cold wind and went to Waroona to volunteer on a farm for 2 weeks. The weather was forecast to be awful so we parked the van in the farm machinery shed protected from the prevailing winds and rain. When weather permitted



we helped around the property doing a variety of jobs such as painting the house back wall, clearing dead wood into piles for burning, cutting firewood, weeding, and Frans helped install the plumbing for a spa bath! He also helped to cut up and remove a large tree which fell on a fence during the storms.

We were very thankful to have been there during the worst weather we have experienced on this trip, safe and sound in the shed.

10 – 20 October

We left Waroona and travelled south east with stays at Kojonup, Kendenup, Moingup Spring (Stirling Ranges) and Mount Barker. During this time Frans had a nasty chest infection and with the wet weather again we spent a lot of time in the van. On fine days we went out and found heaps of beautiful orchids.

21 October

To Tozer's Bush Camp near Bremer Bay where we arrived at the right time to see Sun Orchids coming into bloom. There were lots of different varieties and the tour around the property well worth doing. While there we did a day trip into the west side of Fitzgerald River National Park



Blue Scented Sun Orchid



and saw a mother and calf Southern right whale in the shallow water at Point Ann. They were the last remaining whales of the season and the first we have seen.

25 – 27 October

Time to start heading east but we had to organise the annual inspection for Stopalot and the only place we could find was at Lake Grace. That involved a

detour round trip of 360 klms but it had to be done. We stayed overnight at free camps at Fitzgerald and Ravensthorpe, then to Lake Grace caravan park and back to the coast. We had planned to go to the Fitzgerald River camp ground from the east side but the road into the park had been washed out by winter storms and is closed indefinitely.

28 October

Munglinup Beach camp ground for 3 nights, very windy and cool but a very scenic coastline and a great camp site behind the dunes.

31 October

To Esperance for 2 nights to do some washing, shopping, car service and fix a punctured tyre on the van.



2 November

To Cape Arid National Park for a week – or so we thought. When we got there we discovered that the winter storms had washed away the access track to the beach, so we could not get to the beach or do the coastal walk or go fishing. The camp grounds are very good, but we left after one night.

3 November

To Cape Le Grand beach camp ground, where we stayed for 6 nights and explored the beaches on the Cape. We had to agree that Lucky Bay has the whitest sand beach in Australia and in the sun is the most beautiful bay imaginable.



The other bays (Rossiter, Hellfire, Thistle Cove) are also really lovely and we enjoyed some of the walks and finding geocaches. It was still very cool and not very Spring-like, but mostly dry.

9 – 15 November

Time to get ready to leave W.A. so back to Esperance to do laundry, fill water tanks, stock the fridge and check everything was ready for the trip across the Nullarbor. We left Esperance with a good tail wind and travelled for 2 days before the wind changed. We stayed at a lovely spot called Carlbeencabba for 2 days completely alone until the wind changed again and then continued on. It was a good trip with no problems and mostly fine weather, but still very cold at nights and the diesel heater was used a lot. We got through the quarantine check at Ceduna and stocked up with fresh fruit & veg again before heading to Haslam for a night.



16 November

To Lincoln National Park at the bottom of the Eyre Peninsula, to stay at Surfleet Cove camp



ground. We toured around the Park in mostly fine weather and did some walks to find geocaches including up Stamford Hill to the memorial lookout.

20 – 30 November

Time to start heading to Adelaide where we had arranged to house sit for friends Simon and Cecelia for a few days at their home and vineyard near McLaren Vale. On the way we stayed at Tumby Bay, Lipson Cove, Whyalla, Baroota, Tarlee and Mount Pleasant.

1 – 8 December

House sitting and looking after the dogs and cat. We had some warm days but also some cool and stormy weather. Somehow Frans lost the photos he took of us camped there. It was very different from our last stay 2+ years ago because then it was winter, this time summer with the vines in full leaf and the roses blooming.



9 – 14 December

We left to start our journey to Melbourne for Christmas, staying at Tintinara, Cockatoo Lake,



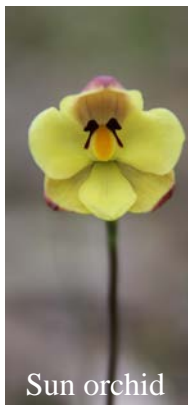
Naracoorte, and Greenrise Lake at Penola. This is a beautiful wine growing area with some very famous wine makers in the Padthaway and Coonawarra districts.

Today we crossed the border into Victoria and are camped at Dartmoor. Tomorrow we go to our friends at Portland for a few days before going to Melbourne.

We have had a couple of very hot days, but it is mostly still quite cool.

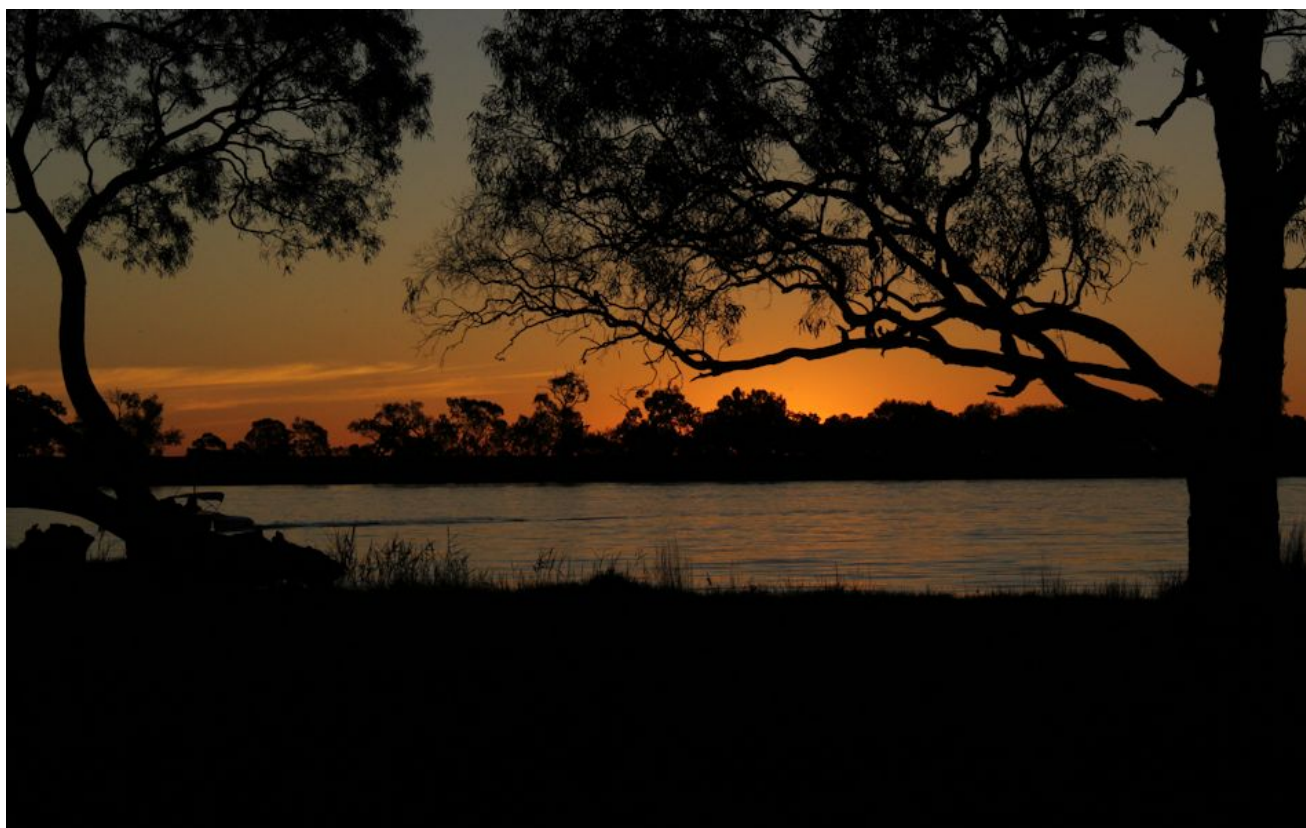
We wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and a prosperous 2017.

Regards,
Frans and Bev





Frans volunteering at Waroona



Lipson Cove



Wonambi Fossil Centre