

to feeding rather than colonising litter and moss above the ground. It is possible that other species at Half Woody Hill are climbing the trunks but not entering the "traps", because they seek refuge in the ground litter. The use of sticky traps in conjunction with the present trap design would identify those animals which were climbing to seek food rather than refuge.

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GREAT CRESTED GREBES AT ORIELTON LAGOON AND PITTWATER

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I have been concerned to notice the recent apparent scarcity of great crested grebes *Podiceps cristatus* at Orielton Lagoon and Pittwater. In earlier years, particularly during winter months, it was quite common to see half-a-dozen or more quite close to the causeway. In case I had got the wrong impression from my irregular visits I asked some other observers who are often in that locality

what their thoughts on the subject were. They confirmed my impression that crested grebes are very few this year in comparison with past years.

The reason for this scarcity seems clear: the water in the south-west corner of the lagoon is highly polluted to an extent I've not known previously. I understand that the effluent from Midway Point Sewerage plant is not filtered before being discharged into Orielton Lagoon. There is thus little chance of any improvement in water quality in the lagoon unless better sewerage treatment facilities are installed.

Members of the Bird Observers Association of Tasmania have been lobbying for years to have the lagoon and the adjacent Pittwater proclaimed a wildlife reserve, but so far without success. The area is recognized as being of international importance for migratory birds. Given its significance it is deplorable that the authorities are willing to sanction the degradation of the Lagoon.

THE LESSER WANDERER BUTTERFLY *DANAUS* *CHRYSSIPUS* IN TASMANIA.

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On a brief field trip to the north-west of Tasmania on 18/19 January 1993, I observed five specimens of the vagrant Lesser Wanderer butterfly, *Danaus chrysippus*, at four different locations (Stanley, Mt. Cameron West, Marrawah and along the Temma road near Arthur River). I was able to examine three of the specimens closely and all looked extremely fresh, almost as if they had just hatched, so much so that my companion Mark Neyland expressed some doubt that they could have crossed Bass Strait. The weather conditions at the time were mild to warm, but, importantly, it followed two days of extreme temperatures on 15/16 January with moderate to strong northerly winds.

The Lesser Wanderer is a large butterfly, approximately the same size as the Common Brown, *Heteronympha merope*. It is caramel brown on the upper surface with a dark, almost black margin, broadest on the outer forewing where there is also a white blotch. The hindwings are paler caramel with a dotted dark brown and white margin. It is not a particularly swift flyer nor does it appear particularly strong on the wing but obviously its looks belie its capabilities for it is able to fly long distances. We did not see any of our specimens land, but one showed some interest in some flowering thistles.

The butterfly is known to occur at intervals in Tasmania, but it is never