

## Kowen Forest, Wednesday 17 April 2017

A rather diminished group of Wednesday Walkers explored the very dry area at Kowen Forest from Sparrow Hill Road. It didn't help that we remembered the last ANPS walks during the ANPSA Conference in November 2015 when there was lush and flowering vegetation.

Having said this, the outstanding feature remains the massive eucalypts that dot the woodland. The broad crowns of *Eucalyptus bridgesiana*, *E. melliodora* with varying bark patterns, *E. rossii* and *E. mannifera* gave us some welcome dappled shade when the day warmed up. Seeing many scratches on some large trunks there were many suggestions – sugar gliders possibly? We also had a close look and a discussion about the large mistletoes in bud festooning some eucs.

The lack of rain has reduced the understorey to mainly crisp leaf litter and dead branches. Even the hardiest shrubs seem to have a hard time. *Melichrus urceolatus* and *Cryptandra amara* are budding, *Vittadinia muelleri* is ever present and provides tiny flecks of mauve together with *Brachyscome rigidula* and *Geranium solanderi*. The yellow flowers of *Hypericum gramineum* and some *Wahlenbergia communis* provide additional colour here and there. A large patch of *Callitris endlicheri* also contrasted in bright green.

We were surprised at morning tea to find the dam quite full and the surrounding grassland rather green. Obviously an attraction for the roos seeking water and feed but who didn't seem to appreciate our intrusion, jumping off into the bush again.

Even though there was a paucity of the many species we have been seen in the past we were actually able to add a few more names to our species list such as the *Amyema pendula*, *Eriochilus cucullatus*, *Desmodium varians*, *Kunzea parvifolia* and the aquatic *Ottelia ovalifolia* in the dam.

