

# FOREST RINGLET PROJECT REPORT

14/03/2021

On 25 January Hugh Smith and I made a trip to the [REDACTED] to conduct a search for forest ringlet eggs. The timing was based on the February 2020 trip where a number of eggs was found so it was thought a couple of weeks earlier this time would allow for any seasonal variations and perhaps even a sighting of the butterfly.

The previous year's route was followed, and the usually productive *Gahnia* plants were carefully searched for eggs but we were disappointed to find nothing. Later in the day, and by pure chance, I noticed a forest ringlet larva lower down on a blade of *Gahnia*, only because it moved as I was examining the blade for eggs. The larva was secured in an appropriate container.

Further examination and measurements showed the larva to be a 2<sup>nd</sup> instar individual measuring 11 mm in length, which meant the eggs must have been laid some seven weeks earlier, placing the ovipositing approximately early December. Even allowing for perhaps an early individual eclosure, this would indicate an earlier emergence of the adults than last season.

It then became apparent that with all our focus on searching for eggs we may well have missed other larvae, but as it was a little late in the afternoon to retrace our steps it was decided to make a return trip later at which time the larvae will have grown a little more and hopefully easier to spot the feeding notches.

The larva was [REDACTED] and secured on a potted *Gahnia* plant in a secure container, where it has been feeding regularly ever since. Growth of the larva is exceedingly slow but the captive has grown another 2 mm in length.

It is hoped the next trip we will find a few more larvae as any research is limited with only one specimen to work with. Other areas in the [REDACTED] have been visited but so far no other productive sites have been found yet. Further possibilities of sourcing individuals from [REDACTED] are to be investigated.

*Morm Juggel*