



Euastacus brachythorax

Went with Chris Lukhaup from Germany on an expedition to Brown Mountain west of Bega NSW to catch a few *Euastacus brachythorax*. Chris and I had been crayfishing all day and doing quite well. Generally I just need 30 minutes on site and I have my specimens needed and then off to the next. Well by the time we got to Brown Mountain it was dark so we had to just hike down the mountain in the dark to the creek to get a few specimens. It was cold and miserable and a totally deserted area, we were it. Being dark the first thing you do is spotlight the creek to see what is out and about. That unfortunately was unsuccessful so we started turning rocks. I left Chris to work his way downstream and I headed upstream about 100 metres. It was very uneventful except for a platypus that actually had a go at me. Now I had always thought that platypus were very quite reclusive animals that avoided human contact and would hide from you. Well, as I was searching this platypus pond for yabbies this animal came screaming out of the depths right to my feet where it snapped its bill at me then did a U turn splashing me with its tail and tore off into the depths again.

Well that was unusual but nothing too strange, I continued searching for critters and got a couple of big ones and a couple of little ones so headed back to find Chris. Chris had also got a few so we sorted the catch, threw back all except the 2 best, took some photos of the area and trudged back up the mountain and drove into Bega for the night. The trouble is that somewhere between arriving at Brown Mountain and arriving in Bega we had lost 1 hour and 11 minutes. Our watches had stopped for exactly 77 minutes. Now this was straight out of the X files, you just don't lose 77 minutes. When I talk to people about it they all start talking about alien abductions and anal probes!! Well all I can say is that I checked that my underwear was on the right way and all was good.

