



Newsletter 027 Decemeber 1995

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FRIENDS OF CHILTERN PARK
Convenor: E. Collins 057 261 484
Newsletter No. 27 December 1995



Dear Friends

As 1995 draws to a close Friends can look back over the year with considerable satisfaction. Although our membership increased the number of active members decreased for various reasons. The active members completed many projects the most demanding ones being the laying of the walking track and the completion of tree planting on the tip reserve. Three thousand five hundred trees and shrubs of local species are thriving. Those planted in October 1994 now obscure their guards, so much for the drought!

The December â??Breakfast at Cyanide Damâ?• was most enjoyable. The array of breakfasts was interesting and included strawberries and cherries brought along to share. A leisurely walk around the Cyanide Road All Nations circuit produced 28 species of birds. After morning tea we began the serious task of cutting down feral trees. Apples, Olives and Hawthorns felt the teeth of the saws and the pasterâ??s brush. Forest litter was dragged across a revegetation rip on Battery Hill Road. The Genista patch near the Old Cemetery had produced new seedlings. Those on the perimeter of the patch were pulled and the remaining thick patch will be sprayed. At 1430 hours (2.30pm for those who prefer it) we called it a day.

The park is drying off quickly, there are young birds everywhere, the purple Finger Flower (Cheiranthra) Blue Pincushions IBrunoniaj and Everlastings are dominant. The colour and aroma of Vanilla Lilies is evident in the wetter areas and duck Orchids can still be found amongst the Stringybarks, thanks to the extended wet periods. Tree Everlasting is prolifÃ-c along the recently

disturbed edges. The Wild Cherries are interesting, some have quite large red fruits while others are coming into flower. The fruits are juicy and quite tasty, probably due to the plentiful rainfall. The Box Mistletoe fruits are ripe and attracting the colourful Mistletoe Bird. Painted Honeyeaters enjoy these fruits too. These birds are breeding and have become quiet and hard to find.

The Turquoise Parrot logs will be surveyed for the last time this month. The erection of these logs was our first project. Although the parrots declined to use them many other species of birds and mammals found them attractive homes. The fact that they are sought after underlines the shortage of suitable hollows in the park. The food of Turquoise Parrots is most varied. I watched an adult male on the road edge chewing a piece of greenery. When it flew I examined the feeding spot and found a small, single Hypochoeris plant {Flat Weed} with its leaves freshly chewed away. I wondered if some nestlings were getting their daily vegies!



The first mammal boxes which were installed by the original Friends group are coming up for their 10 year check in January and the second set get their 10 year check in September. Bruce Quin is grateful for the support given in monitoring logs and boxes and has asked that his thanks be passed to all who helped.

Striated Pardalotes also face accommodation problems or perhaps they are opportunists. I saw them using the drainage holes on the freeway ramparts, a site fraught with problems in wet times. Later in the month they had upgraded their accommodation and now enjoy the comfort of the Fairy Martins' nest in the freeway tunnel. The entrance hole is the perfect size. .

From the meeting:

1. A workshop will be held at CNR Wangaratta office on Wednesday December 20 from 1000hrs-1430hrs to explain the Botanic Guardians Scheme and the VROTPop recording forms. This scheme is designed to encourage interested persons to monitor rare or threatened plant populations.

4. A meeting will be held in February to arrange the 1996 programme. Ideas and contributions are needed. Again, please make contact.

5. Activities for the January campout were discussed. The evening activity will be a spotlight walk.

To everyone who has contributed to our cause in any way, thank you.

To our Ranger, John McDonald for his advice, co-operation and assistance a big thank you.

Much has been achieved in 1995.

To WAW Credit Union, Chiltern Branch for the support they have provided by printing our newsletters.

Especially to Kay who fits the copying in between her many tasks.

A SAFE AND HAPPY FESTIVE SEASON TO YOU ALL

NEXT MEETING JANUARY 6 AND 7 1996

Will be a campout at Cyanide Dam. Come along, bring a friend and enjoy tea and breakfast in the peace

of the park.

FEBRUARY MEETING SATURDAY FEBRUARY 3 A TEA MEETING AT CYANIDE DAM.

Category

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Date Created

2012/12/31

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