



Newsletter 013 1994

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FRIENDS OF CHILTERN PARK

Convener: E.Collins 057 261 484

Newsletter no. 13 September 1994

Dear Friends,

The park is feeling the effects of the extremely dry spell of weather which has been accompanied by unseasonably high temperatures. There is very little blossom on the Ironbark trees which has resulted in low numbers of many birds and absence of Friarbirds and Red Wattlebirds. One Regent Honeyeater has been reported but efforts to relocate it have failed. A few Olive-backed Orioles were seen feeding on insects on the foliage. The Golden Wattle, Silver Wattle and Varnish Wattle is spectacular throughout the park. The flowering has not been marred by rain. .

After gathering at Donkey Hill our small group went to Frogs Hollow to remove the exotic trees and gather the rusty garbage from the early 1900's dwelling area. In a normal spring this area would be very wet. Our globe trotting ranger will be well pleased with our efforts. The tree planting could not proceed due to circumstances beyond our control. However everything should be ready for the next gathering on October 2nd. Some members and their friends will be planting frees from September 20th onwards. If you would like to contribute to the effort please contact me.

Glen Johnson and Bruce Quin will be with us in October, so there will be something for everybody. Please come along, not everyone will be planting trees.

From the meeting:

1. Colin suggested that we have several activities at gatherings to cater for all needs. If your needs are not being met please let us know. .

2. A copy of Fleur Stelling's Revegetation Guide for Black Dog Creek Basin was tabled. Fleur's book contains valuable information for anyone who is interested in area revegetation. Copies can be obtained from DCNR at a cost of \$15. Incidentally, Black Dog Creek was the original name for the Chiltern area. The name arose from the shooting of a black dog at the creek by a man named Hawdon. Around 1853-4 the settlement became Chiltern, probably because the early settlers came from the Chiltern Hills in England.

3. Natasha Schedvin, coordinator of the Regent Honeyeater recovery team, wrote to Friends seeking a commitment to the recovery effort. It is anticipated that the survey work would be done on Friends days. Natasha's letter is reprinted below. If you would like to contribute please contact me. Natasha will attend the October Friends gathering. .

NEXT MEETING IS ON SUNDAY OCTOBER 2ND

Bring lunch, gloves, small trowel. Meet at Donkey Hill picnic area at 9.00am.



● Fleur Stelling in a stand of *Pultenaea foliosa* or small-leaf bush pea.

REVEGETATION officer with the Department of Conservation, Fleur Stelling, has done an excellent job in putting together a comprehensive revegetation guide for North-East Victoria. It is one thing to want to replant an area with indigenous species, but it is another to know what to plant, especially if all the native bush has been cleared and you have no idea of what was there in the first place. Ms Stelling, who has

spent two years researching and compiling what is essentially a series of guides for leaf bush revegetation, has made the planning for such a revegetation project that much easier. She sees the books complementing the work done by the Victorian Conservation Trust and landcare groups.

"I feel really excited about the contribution books like these can make to revegetation in the North-East," Ms Stelling said.

"And I'm pleased to have been able to draw a lot of common knowledge together, and also by the enthusiastic support for the guide."

The books were launched by Heather Mitchell, former VFF president, and the Indigo Valley Landcare group.

They are available from departmental offices for \$25 for the overall guide and \$15 each for the specific area.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Your Ref.

Our Ref. 26 August 1994

• Friends of Chiltern Park

CI- Eileen Collins (Convenor)

P.O. Box 60

Chiltern Vic. 3683

Dear Friends of Chiltern Park,

Recently, Peter Menkhorst and I discussed with Eileen Collins the feasibility of Friends of Chiltern Park assisting with the recovery efforts for the Regent Honeyeater. You are probably aware that recent surveys throughout eastern Australia have shown that the population of this boldly patterned black, yellow and white honeyeater has fallen to a critically low level, perhaps fewer than 1000 birds. In order to ensure that the numbers and range of this species do not decline further a Regent Honeyeater Recovery Plan has been developed. The plan details

actions required for the conservation of this species and its implementation has been funded by the Australian Nature Conservation Agency. A coordinated program of habitat protection and enhancement across the entire range of the species will be the corner-stone of the recovery effort.

A Recovery Team has been established to oversee and guide all activities performed on the Regent Honeyeaters behalf. In addition, the recovery effort incorporates research into several aspects of the ecology of the Regent Honeyeater which are fundamental to the successful management of the species. These include further investigations into the specific habitat requirements of Regent Honeyeaters and investigation of their local and large scale movements.

One of the specific objectives of the Recovery Plan is to establish a network of Operations Groups that have a particular commitment to the conservation of the Regent Honeyeater. These groups will be vitally important for the long-term success of the recovery effort. Activities of these groups will include regular bird censuses (targeted to areas where Regent Honeyeaters have frequently been seen in the past),

monitoring of the flowering of the important eucalypt species, promoting awareness of the Regent Honeyeater in their region, and liaising with community groups and landowners in their region to facilitate good environmental management of the land.

Enclosed is a draft statement of the roles of Operations Groups which gives more details. Although ensuring the survival of the Regent Honeyeater in any region will cost more than the \$5000 supplied by the Recovery Team, we will be able to assist and advise on sources of grants and strategies for making successful applications. As a consequence some of your time will be spent applying for grants. Many of the activities currently undertaken by the Friends are very similar to those proposed in the Recovery Plan. We are hoping that the Friends will agree to undertake regular bird censuses, and monitor the flowering of the important eucalypt species. Ideally these would be done on a monthly basis. Consultation with Eileen Collins indicated that there are 6 sites within Chiltern Park that require monitoring.

The sites are:

- 1) Yackandandah Road, between the freeway and Barnawatha Depot Road
- 2) Depot Rd, near Gilman's Track
- 3) Cyanide Dam
- 4) Green Hill Dam
- 5) Chiltern Valley No. 1

6) Ryans Road dam or Mt Pleasant Road dam.

The bird censuses will require approximately 20 minutes at each site and should all be conducted during the morning (if possible). Monitoring the eucalypt flowering will involve checking on individually marked trees to record their budding and flowering stages. In total, I expect these activities will probably require half a day per month.

A newsletter will be produced to keep Operations Groups in the two states aware of each other's activities, the latest developments in research and most recent sightings of Regent Honeyeaters. This letter is intended to introduce the concept of the Regent Honeyeater Operations Groups, and to ask that the Friends of Chiltern Park consider whether they would be willing to take on this role. Given the level of commitment, expertise and enthusiasm which has already been demonstrated by the Friends, Peter and I believe that they are the most appropriate organisation to undertake this role in the Chiltern

area. Please consider our request and let me know your response.

I hope to be able to meet members of the group soon, possibly at the October Friends meeting.

Yours sincerely

Natasha Schedvin

(Regent Honeyeater Recovery Coordinator)

Category

1. Newsletters

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