

Newsletter 155 September 2007

Description

Dear Friends

The September Friends day was a glorious spring day but many things conspired against us as far as attendance was concerned. There was Fathers' Day, members on holiday and members indisposed. So many thanks to the small band of workers who planted extra ironbarks and red box seedlings trees at the Tuan Campsite and tackled the Caper Spurge plants at Bartley's Block. I understand the slices of bun at morning tea were rather large! Good perk! A Green Corp group had spent a day working on the Caper Spurge at Bartleys and the ground was littered with dying Spurge plants. Even after an hour or two of steady work, there is still quite a lot of Spurge to be removed and it is well protected by the sedge tussocks so anyone feeling like tackling it should wear good gloves and a long sleeved shirt to protect themselves from the razor sharp sedge. The park was busy with many birds about on such lovely day. A Western Gerygone serenaded the Spurge pickers as they worked.

The third enclosure at Tuan Campsite is now complete with gate. Thanks to Gail and Pete all the new trees which required guards are now well protected.

The lack of rainfall is inhibiting the growth of the orchids and wildflowers and if rain does not fall in a week or so they will be quite stressed. Let's hope the forecast is correct.

A nasty patch of Gorse in full flower was discovered on the freeway just at the southbound approach to Chiltern. There is a little pocket of this nasty weed on the adjacent Yackandandah and Lancashire Gap Roads. Vicroads will spray the freeway patch and hopefully Friends can eradicate any stray plants on the other two roads while it is still in flower and easy to spot.

Around the park

In October 20 bird watchers from Melbourne will be spending 4 days in the area and enjoying the park and surrounds. Bartley's block is spectacular now that the Golden Wattle is in flower and at the southern end the stand of Silver Wattle is slowly expanding. Birds around Bartley's include the Painted Honeyeater, Turquoise Parrots, Western Gerygone and White-browed Babblers. Elsewhere there are Pallid and Horsfield's Bronze Cuckoos advertising their presence. Waterbirds are returning to the Valley Dams and Diamond Firetails have been reported from No 2 Dam surrounds. Sharp-eyed Phillip spotted a Tawny Frogmouth at Tuan Campsite and it was unusually obvious perched in an Ironbark. Speckled Warbler, always a good bird to record, was seen on Gilman's Boundary Track.

Orchids to look for in September include Nodding, Dwarf, Blunt and Maroonhood Greenhoods. The lovely purple Waxlips, Glossodia major, Leopard Orchids, Diuris pardina, Pink Fingers, Caladenia carnea and the dainty and less common Blue Caladenia Caladenia caerulea. Sun Orchids are in bud so look for them on a bright sunny day.

Rainfall

August 18.2 mm 9 over days. Yearly total: 408.5 mm over 77 days. The forecast has rung true and at the time of writing 8mm has fallen.

November trip to Ouyen

Friends will be going to Ouyen on Melbourne Cup weekend to enjoy the Mallee, its birds and flora. We will be based at Ouyen Caravan Park. For reservations phone the park on : 509 21426

Frogs, butterflies and a new book

If you are interested in the identity of the many frogs which are calling at present this website is excellent, giving distribution, photographs and calls: <http://frogs.org.au>

Butterflies are flitting around, at present the most abundant is the Wood White or Red Jezebel, and the Museum of Victoria has an excellent site to help with identification:

<http://museum.vic.gov.au/bioinformatics/butter/>

A new publication *A Guide to Australian Moths* by Zborowski and Edwards is available from CSIRO at \$40 It has an abundance of colour photographs, detailed information on their role in the environment and their interaction with plants and other animals. This book is field guide size and just great for the car!

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY OCTOBER 6TH MEET AT CHILTERN POST OFFICE AT 9.00AM

BYO Gloves, lunch, chair, binocs and energy. Nest Box checking and orchids and wildflowers with John will be on the menu. Hopefully it will have rained well by then. Contact Eileen 03 57 261 484

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS RENEWED THEIR MEMBERSHIP. IT HAS BEEN VERY ENCOURAGING TO WELCOME NEW MEMBERS.

Category

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