



Newsletter 168 November 2008

Description

The November newsletter reports on nest box modifications for pole top camera access, birding along Peakes track and details how to purchase the Friends of Chiltern 2009 calendar

Dear Friends

The promised rainfall for October did not arrive and the consequences were brought home to us as we traversed the crunchy dry conditions. Usually as we are doing nest box work we have frequent stops to admire the plants and take photographs and do some bird watching but not so this season. Working in the area north of the Indigo Goldfields Cemetery we checked eight nest boxes and modified six. The other two presented us with pleasant surprises with three Sugar Gliders curled up in one and a Squirrel Glider with two small young in another. Of the other six boxes five had leafy nests and one was completely empty. The two occupied boxes were in a group which was fairly close to the park boundary. The second group checked was located well into the forest in a very dry gully and none showed evidence of recent use. Two boxes on Mt Pleasant Road were checked and found to be completely empty. Of the ten boxes checked we were able to modify seven, one of the Mt Pleasant Road boxes was already modified.

Feeling quite satisfied we retired to Bartley's Block for a meeting and the customary morning tea with the birds



A Leaden Flycatcher kept us interested with its lovely song and display. Sitellas, Yellow Robin, Red-capped Robin, White-browed Babbler and Rufous Whistler were all heard. The list was small as we birded from our chairs!

After lunch at Depot Dam, where birds were scarcer still, we pondered over how we would spend the rest of the afternoon. We settled for a walk down Peake's Track to the creek line and it produced twenty-one species including Turquoise Parrots, Jacky Winters breeding, a small group of Cockatiels, Black-faced and Little Cuckoo Shrikes, Diamond Firetails and Brown Treecreepers.



This was our last working meeting for 2008. The December meeting will be our usual shared Christmas Tea, this year to be held at Chiltern Valley No 1 Dam. We will do a waterbird survey for the records.

Around the Park

Not much to report as the drought bites hard. Blue Finger Flowers, *Cheiranthra cyanea* were plentiful but very small along Peake's Track and a few small Grass Trigger Plants were struggling to flower.



On the bright side the Silver Top Wallaby-grass, *Joycea pallida*, was in full flower with its lovely red anthers on show. The last of the peas, Twiggy Bush-pea, *Pultenaea largiflorens*, was at its best and surprisingly fresh despite growing out of stoney soil.

At Chiltern Valley No 1 Dam Spotted and Baillon's Crakes have been seen as well Cattle Egrets, Dollarbird and nesting Little Friarbird.

Unusual visitors

Budgies and White-fronted Chats have been seen at Valley No 2 and along roadsides around Rutherglen. Red-backed Kinfishers are along the gravel section Great Southern Road, Cockatiels around the Chiltern Valley area and a Koel is very vocal around Lake King in Rutherglen. Glossy Ibis have also been seen at various wetlands.

Regent Honeyeater Project

The banded birds have departed and monitoring has ended. Thankyou to all Friends who have assisted with the programme. Our hopes of a successful breeding between Orange White and Blue Red were dashed when they lost their 8-10 day old chicks. The icing on the cake was the fact they the birds stayed so long and made efforts to breed. A successful breeding event would have been the cream. Maybe the ones that left the area were successful elsewhere so wherever you are birding please look out for them.

Rainfall for October: 12.3 mm over 3 days. Total for year to date: 431.8 mm over 75 days. Well below average.

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY DECEMBER 7TH MEET AT CHILTERN P.O AT 3.30PM

We have decided to go to Chiltern Valley No 1 Dam this year.

Come along and share Christmas Tea with us and reflect upon the year's achievements.
BYO tea, chair, binocs, repellent and friends.

2009 Friends of Chiltern Calendars

A limited number of 2009 calendars will be printed. The pick-up cost of the calendar is \$15 and \$20 for non-members. Posted in a padded postpack anywhere in Australia is \$22.30. If you wish to order one please complete the order form below and forward it with a cheque/money-order made payable to "Friends of Chiltern NP" P.O. Box 60, Chiltern 3683 For more than one calendar please ask about postage

International packaging/postage: Packaging \$2.00 (small tube that holds one calendar) and postage USA \$14.85 and UK \$18.15. International postage varies by country

Enclosed please find cheque/money-order for
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