



Newsletter 186 July 2010

Description

The July 2010 newsletter reports on the nest box update process, the regent honeyeater 2010 release and the June Friends activity day

Dear Friends

After a foggy miserable week the sun shone and the weather was perfect for Friends day. Our plan to tackle the replacement of the Slaughteryard Gap boxes looked like being scuttled after the storm caused many track blockages. However Parks came to the rescue and had the track cleared in time. Most of our members have fled to warmer climes so four of us had a busy day. This group of boxes was erected in 1986 by Bruce Quin and it has been five years since they were inspected.

They are in rough hilly and rocky territory so we had plenty of exercise. Six of the seven boxes were found and five were replaced, the sixth had a fresh nest in it so we left it alone. The missing box is a

mystery yet to be solved.



There was no morning tea, no time and no bun! After a very late lunch on a sunny hill on Fisher's Road we made our way, via the bakery to make amends for no bun, to the Rutherglen Conservaton block to check our boxes.

The rains have improved the look of the block, the dam is about a quarter full and worst of all the olives are thriving!

All boxes had nests in them. Two had Sugar Gliders curled up in a huddle and another had a deep wool nest which we thought had an occupant, possibly a Tuan by the smell. The contents and smell of six of the boxes suggested Tuan activity. Feathers, some quite large, wool, bark strips and in one box long strips of synthetic bagging with some dried food pellets in the material, were all suggestive of

Tuan work. Gliders are very clean and their boxes have a not unpleasant earthy odour.



We plan our next visit for mid-August. Sadly Box 3 appears to have been removed as repeated searching failed to locate it. At the last check it had a Squirrel Glider in residence. We will replace this box in August. Birds were scarce all day. In our work area on Slaughteryard Gap the vegetation is mainly Blakely's Gum and stunted White Box. The ground cover is grassy with Rock Fern abundant on the rocky areas. Nothing was flowering and the only birds recorded were Red-capped Robin, Grey Fantail, Yellow Thornbills and a mob of noisy Choughs. Quite a few Swamp Wallabies were disturbed as we tramped the slopes.

On the Rutherglen block we found Red-capped Robins, White-plumed Honeyeaters, Choughs, Noisy Miners, Jacky Winter, Pied Butcherbird and we heard a Noisy Friarbird. Its call puzzled us for a while as it was so unexpected as we thought they were all in the park with the Regents.

Park News

Parks have established a long term monitoring project to attack Bridal Creeper. Monitoring plots and transects have been set up in selected areas of the park. However in some grassy blocks with good ground cover there are only isolated plants. With this in mind Friends may select some of these blocks and GPS the isolated plants ready for spraying.

Our grant money for nest boxes has run out so Friends will fund the next lot of materials for another 20 boxes. Parks will construct the boxes.

On June 21st the first of the Golden Wattle was spotted. Throughout July and August the park will be

brightened by its blossoms.



<h2>BUSH STONE-CURLEW GENETIC ANALYSIS – A REQUEST FOR SAMPLES</h2>

The Australian Museum is conducting a genetics analysis of Bush Stone-curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*) populations from across Australia in collaboration with Bush Stone-curlew conservationists. The Bush Stone-curlew is declining in southern Australia due to fox predation and past habitat fragmentation. It is important that we examine Bush Stone-curlew genetic samples from all over Australia, to uncover information that will help the conservation management of this species.

To obtain Bush Stone-curlew genetic material, we are putting out the call for shedded feathers, tissue or feathers from road-kills, or any bones of decomposed birds that may be found by bird enthusiasts. If any of this material is discovered, it can be sent by post, enclosed in a sealed plastic bag (freeze before sending if possible), to: The DNA Laboratory, Australian Museum, 6 College Street, Sydney, 2010, NSW. Include the locality (a description and map co-ordinates or latitude and longitude if available), the date of collection, and name of collector. For more information, contact Robert Mason, via phone (02 9320 6488) or email rob.mason@austmus.gov.au

Rainfall: June 33.3mm over 7 days. Yearly total to date: 355.1 mm over 37 days.

Regent Honeyeater Release.

Members of Friends and volunteers have been assisting with this work. Anyone who would like to volunteer their time may contact Sarah Kelly, DSE on mobile : 0427 619962 or 03 57 238 659

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY AUGUST 1ST

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9am .BYO Lunch, chair, binoculars. Contact: Eileen: 0357 261 484. Mobile in the field only: 0407 486 480 Activity will be nest box work but may change if the hide area is ready for planting.

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN NATIONAL PARK inc MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

P.O. Box 60 CHILTERN 3683<p>

To assist, please mark the envelope Membership. Please ensure your contact details are current. Thank you.

Friends have achieved a great deal during the past year. Surveys for plants, birds and monitoring, replacing and erection of new mammal boxes, tree planting , weed control and the provision of a bird hide are just some of our contributions. Your support for our activities is valued and your membership renewal is vital to our cause. Membership expires on June 30th.

Please find enclosed my membership of \$10 for 2010-11 The fee covers the whole family and

includes 11 newsletters.

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Category

1. Newsletters

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