



Newsletter 190 Nov 2010

Description

The November 2010 newsletter reports on record rainfall in October, the wonderful flora displays that are a result, the opening of the bird hide, birds currently around the park and lots more<p>

Dear Friends

The October rainfall totals set an all time record for Chiltern being the highest since records began in 1885. Such a fantastic year for the park which is still thriving on the moist conditions. The late peas, Twiggy Bush-pea, *Pultenaea largiflorens*, and Heathy Bush-pea, *Pultenaea procumbens*, are providing lots of colour. The spectacular purple of the Finger Flower, *Cheiranthra cyanea* along with drifts of Grass Trigger-plants, *Stylidium graminifolium*, all add to the late display of colour.



To have a dry mild day for our meeting was a nice change. The finishing touches were put to the hide site . Mulch shovelling and raking along with spraying, and placement of the wetlands board and

commemorative plaque kept us very busy. A little diversion from the work was provided by a long skinny brown snake sunning itself on a log just a few metres from the rakers!



After everyone had a look it suddenly became active and made for a hole in the bank. Phillip failed to get the shot he wanted! Later we were to see another very speedy one making for cover over the bare earth. The message is “take care around long grass and water and be sensibly attired.” Several Turquoise Parrots were spotted on the track as we were leaving. As usual effort was rewarded, this time doubly, by bun and June’s yummy date slice.

Nankeen Track, which leads into the hide, has been closed to vehicles due to the boggy conditions. The track has now dried out but the section through the gate is boggy. In the next week that section will be filled to allow traffic through.

In the afternoon some of the group went to the overflowing Great Southern Swamp just east of Rutherglen to see if we could find the reported Painted Snipe. Heard of the needle in the haystack? It was a bit like that. No snipe were seen but quite a few waterbirds including Shovelers, Hardheads and Australian and Hoary-headed Grebe were listed. As the “soup” ripens we may expect more species to arrive promising a repeat of the 2006 season. A quick trip along Great Southern Road seeking the Red-backed Kingfishers was fruitless.



At 2.30pm an overdue lunch was taken at Chiltern Valley No 1 Dam. Best birds there were male Musk Duck, White-breasted Woodswallows and numerous Red-rumped Parrots. A walk around the gravel heaps produced nesting Striated Pardalotes and Bee-eaters. Scattered Yellow Box was in flower but was not attracting birds.

Our last stop for the day was at the Cemetery Bushland Reserve to check out the nest boxes. One box had alert little Sugar Gliders in it. Two boxes were rather high for our ladder so we plan to relocate them. On the ground that escaped last year’s burn there were lovely drifts of Trigger Plants and small

plants of Finger Flower were abundant.



Around the park

The staff are having a busy time clearing tracks of fallen timber. If you are looking for a good walk both the White Box Walk and Tuan Track Walk are excellent. Although the Chocolate Lilies are over the trip around Donchi Hill is well worthwhile. Bartley's Block continues to provide good birding with both the White-throated and Western Gerygone present along with Speckled Warblers, Red-capped Robins and Turquoise Parrots.

Regent Alert

A recent sighting of a Regent Honeyeater near the boat ramp at Lake Mokoan is a reminder to all birdwatchers to keep an eye out for these elusive birds. Please report any sightings promptly so that follow-up surveys can be undertaken. Glen Johnson: 0418 501 936

Rainfall

October; 184.1 mm over 9 days. Yearly total to date: 772.1 mm over 80 days. As you see we have had a drenching!

Opening of the bird hide

Members please note the hide opening will be on Saturday November 20th. Assemble at 11.30 am for the opening at noon to be followed by a BBQ lunch. Please bring a chair and a spare if you have one. Please: RSVP by Wednesday November 17th for catering purposes. Phone 0357261484 or email: nulgerong@westnet.com.au

DECEMBER MEETING SUNDAY 5TH CHRISTMAS TEA

Meet at HONEYEATER PICNIC AREA around 4pm. Afternoon walk then shared tea and reminisce!<p>BYO food to share, drinks, chair, binocs, repellent (yes, they will be out in force!) NO WORK!!!

2011 FRIENDS CALENDARS AVAILABLE FROM NOVEMBER 23rd

The 2011 calendars cost \$22 plus \$7.75 postage. Payment is by cheque to P.O. Box 60 Chiltern 3683
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