

Newsletter 195 May 2011

Description

The May 2011 newsletter is now available and provides news updates and reports of Friends activities and park flora and fauna.

Dear Friends,

Once again blessed with a glorious autumn day twelve of us attacked the weeds at Tuan Campsite and surrounds. The Nightshade is now in great piles for burning and the young crop of Inkweed lies rotting on the ground. Some huge plants along with a few other ferals were dug out of the dam bank.

As we worked we enjoyed the birds, Grey Fantails, Willie Wagtails, Scarlet Robin, Eastern Spinebill to name a few which were frequenting the enclosures. Wrens and honeyeater nests were noted in the enclosures.

Morning tea in the sun with the bun, was as always, most enjoyable and gave our members Pat and Ewen, visiting from Melbourne, a chance to meet other Friends.

Next stop was the cactus site on the Howlong Road. Armed with bags, shovels and mattocks we made short work of the patch of ferals. The bagged plants were collected for disposal by parks crew. However as the plant has underground runners we will have to keep a close eye on the site for new plants. Crossing the to the east side of the road we visited the second site of the cactus. The huge plants are beyond the capabilities of the Friends group but we may tackle the ones which are creeping outward from the main site. The yellow Burr-daisies seen last month near this site were confirmed as *Calotis lappulacea*.

As the Regents were being seen at Greenhill Dam we decided to lunch there. However the Regents were not co-operating. The Regents that were at Bartley's Block have apparently moved on. Currently the only spot we know of is at Greenhill Dam where they come to drink and dip.

After lunch the group divided up to scout for Regents. Pipeline Track produced a lovely flock of Little Lorikeets in a flowering White Box as well as smaller honeyeaters and White-browed Babblers. Everyone returned with a nil report!

Birds around the dam have included Purple-crowned Lorikeets and Rose Robin, two species always nice to see.

The downside in recent weeks has been the dust! However as I write rain is tumbling down, what a relief!

Re sightings of White-eared Honeyeater and Bassian Thrush reported from Bartley's block: the honeyeater has been confirmed but not the Bassian Thrush. There is a suggestion it may have been a juvenile Blackbird. If anyone is birding near the dams and spots the thrush please let me know. The

block is still providing great birding with Speckled Warblers and thornbills amongst the wattles.

Butterflies

Another interesting more northerly species has turned up, this time a Scarlet Jezebel one of the many jezebel species. Jan Heywood captured the web photo. The larval food plant is mistletoe species.

Birds of north-east video on web

Matt Weeks has offered some great video for the website. Thanks Matt.

Regent Honeyeater search: On Saturday May 21st the Regent search will be repeated. Assemble at Magenta Mine at 8.15am for an 8.30am briefing. Lunch will be supplied. CONTACT: Glen Johnson to register on 0260 437 924 or email : Glen.Johnson@dse.vic.gov.au

Easter in the wetlands

Six friends members enjoyed a lovely day searching for Painted Snipe just across the border in NSW. The backroads of southern NSW can be good bird habitat, especially where remnants of Callitris woodlands and wetlands remain. We had heard (via Birdline) that Painted Snipe were detected on a small wetland near Coreen, a short drive from Rutherglen and the opportunity to see this very rare waterbird was too good to miss. En route to the site we stopped at a few wetlands where numerous waterbirds were observed and highlights were the threatened egrets and wonderful Grey-crowned Babblers and Apostlebirds ...

NSW had more extensive wetlands near roads than neighbouring areas in Victoria with lots more birds to see as a result. A few members 'ticked' the snipe and enjoyed seeing hundreds of whistling ducks for the first time. Thanks to Eileen and Phillip for providing transport on the day. Thank you Martin O'Brien for this report.

Birding in Southern Riverina NSW 23 April 2011

Wetland on Riverina Hwy

Red-rumped Parrot, Magpielark, Swampheaven, Coot, Black Duck, Wood Duck (with big clutch of downy young), Australasian Grebe, HH Grebe, White-faced Heron, Eastern Great Egret, Welcome Swallow, Aust Raven, Magpie, S Kingfisher, Plains Froglet (?)

First wetland stop on Balldale – Coreen Rd

Black Duck, Eurasian Coot, Little Pied Cormorant, Noisy Miner, Apostlebird, Grey-crowned Babbler, Grey Butcherbird, Galah, A Shelduck. Rufous Whistler, Hardhead, Pink-eared Duck, White-faced Heron, Laughing Kookaburra, HH Grebe.

‘Snipe wetland’

Plumed Whistling Duck, Black Swan, Eastern Great Egret, Intermediate Egret, Magpielark, Eastern Rosella, Painted Snipe (3), Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike, Little Pied Cormorant, Whistling Kite, Peregrine Falcon, Brown Goshawk, Straw-necked Ibis, Swamphen, Grey Butcherbird, Swamp Harrier, Australasian Grebe, Masked Lapwing, Baillon’s Crake (seen earlier by another birdo – see Birdline NSW).

Lonesome Pine Reserve

Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, Little Thornbill, Red-capped Robin, Australian Magpie, Grey Butcherbird

Rainfall: April: 36.1 mm over 4 days. Yearly total to date: 439.5 mm over 29 days.

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY JUNE 5th

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9.00am BYO lunch, binocs, chair. Nest Box checking. Contact 0357 261 484 or 0407 486 480 (in the field only if lost or late)

Category

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