



Newsletter 197 July 2011

Description

The July 2011 newsletter reports on the June meeting of Friends and the weed control activities and continuing great conditions for vegetation recovery

Dear Friends,

A cool and partly cloudy day heralded the end of a pleasantly warm week. However we soon warmed up as we tackled the olives along Mt Pleasant Road. This area was targeted for Olives some years ago so we did not expect to find too many.

Initially it looked promising and after half an hour the count was under twenty. This was too good to be true as we came across a few spots they had recolonised. Our removal total for the day was ~50 plants, some quite large. Half a dozen huge trees were tagged for the Parks staff to attack with chain saws. Some of the plants previously cut down had regrown so this time we put saw cuts into the stumps and cut and exposed the root runners then added a liberal dose of herbicide. The smaller ones we grubbed out. They are very difficult plants to kill! Thanks to the members who worked hard...and later enjoyed the tea and bun.



The camera was trialled again and was found to have insufficient light to see the box contents. Howard from Bright Star, is going to add more LEDs to the camera head. The timber used for the boxes is very dark brown inside and this is causing the problem. I am confident it will be sorted out by the next meeting. The six next boxes checked were all unoccupied but all bar two had signs of recent use. A Tuan is using one box and it looks as if a glider is putting up some opposition as there was a comfy cup leaf nest on top of the Tuan nest. It would seem the gliders are not too fussy about having Tuan poo in the box too. Another box proved very hard to open and when John did manage to lift the lid he found it completely filled with honeycomb!



The box was removed for cleaning and the honeycomb sampled....



During our ramblings we found Trigger Plants, Guinea flower, Speedwell, Peas, Hardenbergia and Hovea in flower. The Trigger Plants have really got the months mixed up as one would not expect to see them flower until October. Golden Wattle is on cue and beginning to brighten the park. This really is a strange year weatherwise and many visitors have commented on the lushness of the understorey and early flowering. The fungi are thriving on the wet conditions and several are featured in the web version of the newsletter. Pic Birdwatchers have descended on the park in search of the Regent Honeyeaters and have not been disappointed. The Greenhill-Magenta Road corner is a good spot to see them showing off. Swift Parrots have not been spotted.



Around the Park: The renovation work at Honeyeater Picnic area is almost complete. The new parking bays will provide for safer parking and the new bridges for safer walking. The steps around the dam walk will be completed as soon as the weather allows. This work is a major improvement.



Around the “Take-a-Break” walking track in the Barnawartha Block the mine shaft fencing is being replaced. This walk has proved a popular break for travellers of the Hume who use the southbound Chiltern Park rest area. It was created by the Friends group in the 1990’s and Friends funded the interpretive signage.

Weed mapping is underway in selected sections of the park, targeting Bridal Creeper and other weeds. In the course of this programme a new plant for the park was discovered. *Templetonia stenophylla* , Leafy Templetonia, a low growing pea species with attractive green and reddish flowers. This is a plant out of its known range.

Spraying of the Bridal Creeper is in progress and will hopefully curtail the spread. This plant has fleshy red berries which birds like blackbirds eat and so spread the seed far and wide. Unfortunately it is still sold in plant nurseries.

Membership: Thank you to everyone who has renewed their membership.

Rainfall: June: 37.8 mm over 10 days. Yearly total to date: 513.4 mm over 45 days.

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY AUGUST 7TH Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9.00am BYO lunch, binocs, chair. Nest box checking and weeding. Afternoon searching/monitoring Regent Honeyeaters. Contact Neville; 0260 208 632 or 0357 261 484 or 0407 486 480

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN NATIONAL PARK inc MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

P.O. Box 60 CHILTERN 3683 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 2011-12 The fee covers the whole family and includes 11 newsletters.

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1. Newsletters

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