

Newsletter 210 September 2012

Description

Dear Friends

Celebrating National Wattle Day, an enthusiastic group enjoyed perfect weather, and the joys of a park awakening from its winter rest. Alan Gibb chatted about the various wattle species that were present. Six native species were found in a small block. These ranged from the tiny Ploughshare Wattle, its common name reflecting the leaf shape's resemblance to a ploughshare, to the larger Red-Stem Wattle, *Acacia rubida* and one feral Cootamundra. The fate of that lone species was to be ringbarked by stone-aged methods (we had no saw) ie by finding a sharp edged stone! Joseph and Gary provided the energy taking it in turns as the task was hard on the hands.

[Acacia gunnii Ploughshare Wattle](#)



Tony kindly brought a pole camera for the nest box inspections and we enjoyed the new technology. Seeing the occupants of the boxes on the LCD screen was interesting and the young people present were delighted.



Of the eleven boxes inspected five were occupied by either Sugar or Squirrel Gliders. While walking from box to box keen eyes found four species of Greenhoods, some nice specimens of the edible fungi Morel, tiny Caladenias, Buttercups, Purple Hovea, drifts of Hardenbergia, stunning shrubs of purple Austral Indigo and many other plants. Two wet years in a row have created a wonderful spring.

The call of a Swift Parrot coming from a flowering White Box attracted everyone's attention. With so many eyes it was soon located and just as quickly departed. On our way back to the vehicles we heard more calls and decided it was probably the same bird. Other birds recorded were Painted Button-quail, Black-chinned, Brown-headed, Fuscous and Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters. September will mark the return of the summer migrants and the departure of the winter migrants to the hills Brown Treecreeper calls welcomed us to a late, and very welcome, afternoon tea at Honeyeater Picnic area.



The day's experiences and the customary bun were shared before we retired to the hall for a hearty meal and more conversation before the AGM and our guest speaker, member Alan Gibb. Alan's passion for wattles and their conservation was evident in his presentation. He has travelled Victoria in all seasons to photograph wattles in all their life stages. At times he was elated by his finds and at other times devastated by the loss of rare species. We wish him well with the production of a photographic identification book on Wattles.

A message to Friends from secretary Neville Bartlett

Thank you all for a great job at the AGM. The meal and AGM were excellent and the fact that things ran an hour later than last year was a sign that everyone there thoroughly enjoyed themselves. The long series of questions after Alan's talk indicated that his talk was much appreciated. All of the work beforehand and the way that everyone pitched in was something very special â?? well done and thank you again. Neville.

From the AGM

The committee members for 2013 are: N Bartlett, P Gotham, treasurer, J Birkhead, E. Collins, J Davidson, M Smith, J Hawker, P Seely, J Gotham, R Jerome.

2013 Friends Calendar

Friends are invited to submit photographs for inclusion in the calendar. They need to be in high resolution and be taken in the park in either the Chiltern or Pilot section. We expect the calendars to be ready by November 19th at the latest. The print run is likely to be 100 and so far we have 80 orders. Only a few extras will be ordered.

Around the park

In 1999 the block bounding Ballarat Road and Yackandandah was the target of an ecological burn. At that time the ground cover was sparse and the wattles had senesced. Drought years followed the burn but the emerging seedlings clung to life. Now in 2012 the block is thick with Golden Wattle and peas. Similarly along Depot Road the burn of six years ago has produced an explosion of peas. Both blocks have benefitted from the two wet years and the seed banks have been replenished.

There have been several sightings of Sambar Deer in the Koala Track area and recently two were seen engaged in a "battle" in the middle of Lancashire Gap Road. Despite the presence of a vehicle they were reluctant to move!

The Chiltern Valley No 2 plantings are ablaze with wattle and peas. To complete the placement of tall guards around the Cypress Pine area, we have placed six



years have made to an area devoid of understorey.



Membership

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