

Newsletter 211 October 2012

Description

Dear Friends,

The day prior to our meeting was extremely wet with a fall of 38mm of rain. Our Sunday gathering at Chiltern Valley No 2 dam and later at Donchi Hill could not have been in more pleasant weather. Such is spring!

More work was undertaken on the dam edge walking track and Parks staff will complete the starting point of the track and erect signage. Guards were cut and placed around smaller trees and thistles were hoed. Pelicans have arrived, obviously finding the dam a good source of food, which hopefully is carp.



After tidying up at the hide area we walked the walking track before enjoying morning tea. Donchi Hill was the next stop where we looked for the lovely pea, *Templetonia stenophylla*.

However we were too late for the flowering but were pleased to find the plants with plenty of developing seed pods. These plants were new to some of our group so the photographers amongst us were able to capture images of the pods. The plants are ground hugging and sprawling, quite insignificant unless in flower, and hard to locate among the grasses and lilies. By this time we were ready for lunch which we enjoyed on Bull Ant Track

corner, listening to bird calls and enjoying the warmth of the sun. Neville brought the pole camera along for the next box inspections. Three of the seven boxes contained gliders and one was being used by a Tuan as evidenced by the scats in the corners. Gliders are cleaner!

The boxes we inspected were specially placed to see if we could attract Feathertail Gliders but so far we have no luck. One box contained a perfectly round nest of leaves with a top entrance and according to Ronald Strahan in *Australian Mammals* this is typically a Feathertail nest, so there is hope that we may have success. The globular nest was certainly very different from any other glider nests seen during our years of inspections.

The group divided and the photographers went in search of the uncommon *Indigofera australis* Tick Indigo. The site recommended revealed several plants but once again the flowering had declined. Two new boxes were erected on a site in an area where a single box was located. A quick trip to the cemetery bushland reserve in the hope of lowering a box that was too high was in vain as the box was full of gliders!

Significant bird for the was the Painted Honeyeater on Donchi Hill Rd. A very full and interesting day.

Friends Calendar 2013

2013 Friends Calendar: If you would like to purchase a calendar there are two weeks left to place an order.

Around the park

Regent Honeyeaters have bred successfully and may be found on Cyanide Road close to the All Nations Road junction. The lone Regent seen at Lappinâ??s Dam has not been seen again despite searching.



The White Box is having an exceptionally good and long flowering period so any patch is worth scrutinising despite the overwhelming noise of the friarbirds. Many of the migrants are back including Sacred Kingfishers, Rufous Whistlers, Woodswallows and both Western and White-throated Warblers. Bartleyâ??s Block remains the best spot for bird diversity. We are still unable to locate Hooded Robins in the park so notice of any sightings would be welcome.



The grim news is the spread of Sambar deer in the park. A stag and young were spotted in the Mt Ochertyre Bushland reserve and "Preaching Trees" and footprints have been seen on All Nation's Rd and Mt Pleasant Rd.



"Preaching Tree" is a term used for a tree on which the stag rubs its antlers. They are said to prefer Wild Cherry for this activity but we have only noted use of stringybark and Blakely's Gum

The Wedge Pea *Gompholobium* hu

r, is flaunting its huge golden



yellow flowers through out the park

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Closer to the ground the brilliant Guinea Flower, *Hibbertia riparia* is rivalling its brilliance.



Chocolate lilies are abundant but perhaps not as evident as in other years due to the amazing growth of understorey post two wonderful seasons. The Waxlip Orchids have been in clumps this spring and reports from Killawarra report the same abundance.



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Chiltern Valley No 2

As more guards are required for shrub protection against hares and rabbits an extra roll of wire will be purchased to complete the work. Ranger John came to the meeting and discussed the work needed to complete the walking track to the hide along the dam edge and suitable placement of signage. Friends decided to purchase a Chicane gate instead of having a stile for access to the area when the track is too wet for vehicles. The thistles, which are having wonderful growing season along with other weeds, will be sprayed by the contractor. New gates are also being purchased for Bartley's Block.

Rainfall: September 14.6 mm over 4 days. Year to date:743.5 mm over 63 days.

NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY NOVEMBER 3RD

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9.00am BYO chair, water, binocs, repellent, friend and afternoon tea. Contact in the field: Eileen 0407 486 480 or 57 261 484 We will complete the guarding of shrubs at Valley No 2 and then undertake wetland bird counts at Valley Nos 2 and 1 and then at Barambogie Block. In the afternoon we will erect and check further nest boxes. Contact in the field: Eileen 0407 486 480 or 57 261 484

2013 FRIENDS CALENDARS AVAILABLE FROM NOVEMBER 19th

The 2013 calendars will cost \$22 plus Victorian postage of \$8.70 (includes a padded bag). NSW postage \$10.70. For 2 to 3 calendars in same bag (max 3 per bag) add \$4.00 Please forward your
