

Newsletter 215 March 2013

Description

Dear Friends

While districts around us were fortunate enough to get some good rainfall here at Chiltern we managed a miserly 7.5mm. Hopefully when we do get a break the rain will come gently.

The dry conditions did not stop weeds from thriving around the Tuan enclosure area.



Around Depot Dam we found some very healthy Inkweed close to flowering, plus a wayward Silky Oak, an unidentified feral and a few thistles. These were all swiftly disposed of.





The dead shrubs were removed from the three enclosures and others trimmed back. Red-capped Robins were busy catching insects which were probably disturbed by our clearing. Old wren nests were found in the shrubs in the enclosures indicating that the revegetation is serving the wildlife well.

Many of the eucalypts that germinated last spring have survived the dry period and June thought they were deserving of a chance to grow on, so guards were removed from the bigger trees to give them some protection.

The growth of the trees within the enclosures is amazing. Bull Oaks and the lovely *Acacia doratoxylon* are thriving. Both are rare in the Chiltern section of the park and that was the reason for planting them some 8 years ago. *Acacia doratoxylon* is the only wattle in the park that has catkin flowers and after a magnificent flowering it is now festooned with rusty pods..



At morning tea by the dam we were joined by a family of Spotted Pardalotes, Fuscous Honeyeater, Willie Wagtail, Wrens and Grey Fantails all taking a drink. A lone juvenile Dollarbird was perched on a dead limb, Choughs, an Olive-backed Oriole and Magpies were in the bush nearby.



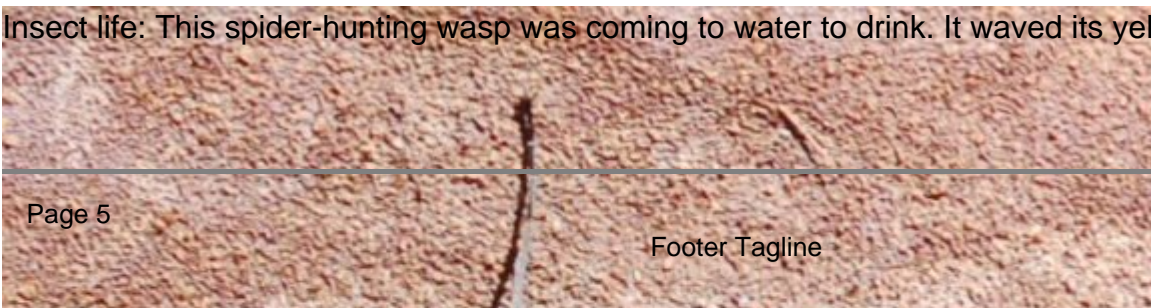
Nest box checking was next on the list and proved very rewarding. The first four boxes yielded a Tuan, Squirrel Gliders with young and Sugar Gliders. We were unable to ascertain the number of bodies in the Sugar Glider pile, four at least were in a very fluffy huddle. Our fifth box contained a Tuan nest with a great variety of feathers, stringybark and what looked like fur, possibly off a kangaroo. The last two boxes contained nests but were unoccupied. These results dispelled any thoughts that the boxes may be too hot in summer.

Lunch was at Mt Pleasant Dam where there was some Grey Box in flower but no honeyeaters using it. All the dams are holding up well and many mine holes still have water in them despite of the dry conditions .

After lunch (3pm!) a few of us went to look at the Deane's Wattle site. It was very degraded and we only found two plants surviving. Several olives were removed from Mt Pleasant Road plus a few seedlings. We will need to survey this block in winter for other survivors of our past eradication work. Our third grass fire in the area broke out west of the park at Cornishtown. Brigades from all around were quickly on the scene and had it controlled in a short time.

Pelicans are still in good numbers on the valley dams. On Sunday 4th there were at least 60 cruising around Valley No 2 so the carp will be having a hard time.

Insect life: This spider-hunting wasp was coming to water to drink. It waved its yellow antennae



constantly. It belongs to the Pompilidae group.

Website

The website has undergone considerable change. Your feedback and or contributions/suggestions would be most welcome.

Rainfall: February 7.5 mm over 2 days. Year to date: 7.5 mm over 2 days.

NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY APRIL 7th 2013

[More details here](#) – hit the Join button to send a message.

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9.00am Hopefully it will have rained by then! Byo lunch, binocs, chair, gloves. Nest box checking as part of our afternoon walk. Looking for early Regent Honeyeater arrivals will be part of the day's activity. Contact in the field : Eileen 0407 486 480 or 57 261 484

HOME AND HEARTH

Our big old trees, fallen or standing, are home to parrots, owls, gliders, frogs, snakes and a myriad of insects.

When we remove the home we evict our neighbours.

Category

1. Newsletters

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