

Newsletter 222 October 2013

Description

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN MT-PILOT NATIONAL PARK inc Newsletter No. 222 October 2013

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Dear Friends,

A pleasantly warm sunny day greeted us for our October meeting so with luck on our side weatherwise we began a day of nest box checking. Of course there is always more to nest box work than looking in boxes and this day was no exception. Attention often switched to the ground for flowers and insect life and overhead for birds. A number of boxes on the All Nations Road were occupied by Sugar and Squirrel Gliders with one box holding a family of Sugar Gliders in a very snug huddle. Web pic. Under an old fallen box lay a handsome specimen of an Orange Footed Centipede, *Cormocephalus aurantiipes*.



which offered a rare opportunity for photos.

After the customary and somewhat late morning tea we moved on to the Rutherglen Natural Features Reserve hoping to find a Tuan for our guest from Sydney. Unfortunately there were only Tuan nests this time around, and the usual gliders. The occupancy count for the day was really rewarding.



The Rutherglen block provided a different and interesting ground flora. Some plants recorded were *Pimelia curviflora*, Variable *Glycine*, *G. tabacina* with its dainty mauve flower spikes, Slender Tick-trefoil *Desmodium varians*, an uncommon plant with an insignificant pale cream and pinkish flower spike. On the bare ground there were carpets of yellow Pygmy Sunray, with the long name of *Triptilodiscus pygmaeus*.

Olives were abundant and plans are afoot to wage war on them.

Around the park:

While in the Mt Pilot section of the park Neil and I came across a turreted structure about six centimetres high. Wondering what owned it we did a bit of 'fishing' with a dry stem thinking we would get a spider. But no, out came an ant followed by a few more ants. They were not aggressive and they proceeded to drag the dry stem into their nest. The 'turreted' entrance was beautifully constructed in the granitic soil with chewed up grasses and other debris. The ant was of the *Camponotus* species of Sugar Ants.



There is a splendid show of wild flowers around the park. On the highest point of Tower Hill Road the Chocolate Lilies are spectacular and very hard to photograph well .Web pic

Musky Caladenias, *C gracilis* are in full flower and the Blue Pincushions, *Brunonia australis* are about to put on a good show. Some really lovely specimens of Showy Podolepis *P jaceoides* were found on Koala Track where it runs off Lancashire Gap Road.

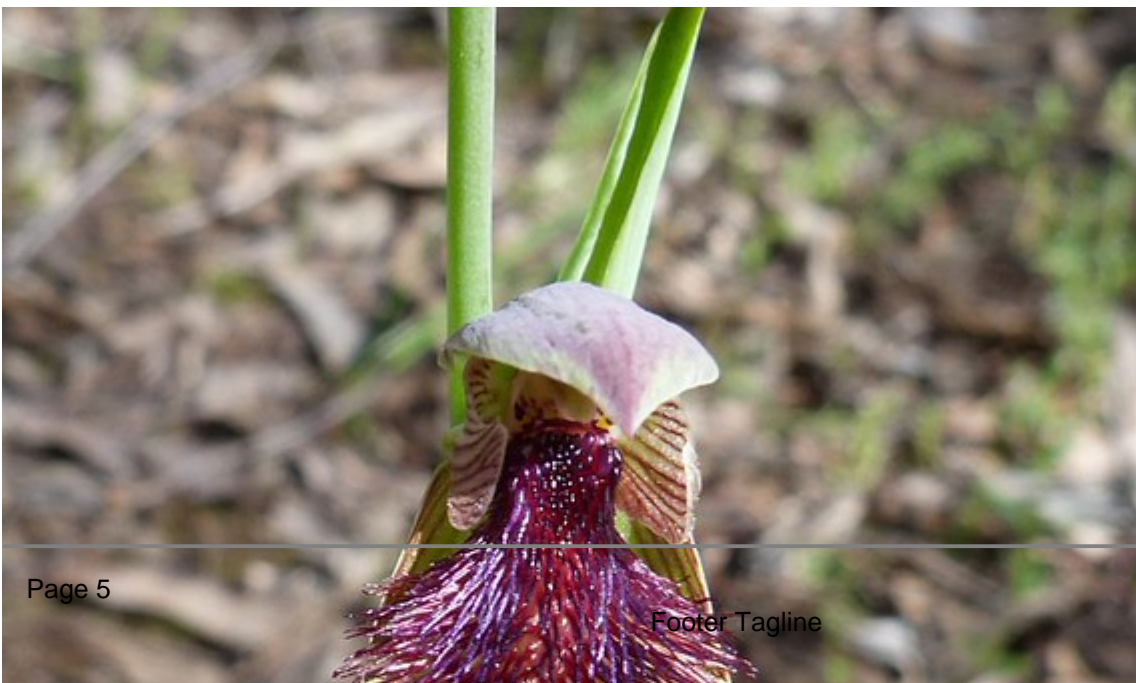


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