

Newsletter 232 September 2014

Description

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Dear Friends,

On a glorious spring afternoon everyone enjoyed a walk along All Nations and Cyanide Roads. Despite the dry conditions there were orchids, peas and shrubs flowering for our enjoyment. Donkey Orchids, *Diuris pardina*, and tiny Dusky Caladenias, *Caladenia fuscata* were abundant. Yam Daisies and Early Nancies were scattered along the way. Drifts of **Beard Heath** along All Nations Road were stunning. The delicate fringed, snowy white flowers needed a magnifying glass to help one appreciate their intricate beauty.

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Colonies of **Blunt Greenhoods** *Pterostylis curta*, were found in the grassy areas but the earlier Nodding and Dwarf Greenhoods had finished flowering.



Low growing Gold Dust Wattle, with its lemon flowers is at its best in the drier areas. Birds were scarce where we walked, some of those recorded were Olive-backed Oriole, Yellow Robin, Black-chinned and Brown-headed Honeyeaters. On our return to the carpark a couple cheeky of **Brown Treecreepers** moved amongst us collecting crumbs.



black chinned honeyeater



As the cool of the evening set in we moved off to the comfort of the hall and some early refreshments. As usual the members excelled themselves with the provision of a delicious array of food. A big thank you to all who provided food and assisted with the kitchen work and clearing up afterwards.

AGM :

The following persons were elected to the committee: Eileen Collins (President), Richard Jerome (Vice President), Peter Gotham (Treasurer), Neville Bartlett (Secretary/Public Officer), Phillip Seely, Jennifer Davidson, Neil Blair, Mick Webster, Jan Heywood, John Hawker, Moya Smith, Jim O'Toole and June Gotham.

The AGM was followed by a presentation by Richard Loyn. Richard is a well-known ecologist who has just been awarded the D.L. Serventy Medal by Birdlife Australia for his extensive contribution to ornithology in Australia. His talk was about a four-week trip to Madagascar during which he visited most of the main habitats in that country. Madagascar is the world's fourth largest island situated just to the east of Africa. Its human population and wildlife reflect much more its early origin as part of Gondwanaland and its subsequent drift towards Africa. The human settlement is a blend of Polynesians (2,000-3,000 years ago), Africans and Arabs (~1,000 years ago) and Europeans (over the

last 500 years) speaking just two main languages: Malagasy and French. The island's climate is mostly tropical with wet in the east and dry in the south-west. The island is well-known for its many species of lemurs that are endemic to Madagascar but it has several families of birds that are also endemic to the island. Richard's talk featured numerous photographs of these endemic birds, mammals, frogs as well as the people and places that he encountered on the journey. His passion for wildlife was clearly evident and his photography of a very high standard. This all kept us enthralled and encouraged to put Madagascar on our bucket list of places to see. Thank you Neville for this report.

Around the Park:

The migrants are returning, Dusky and White-browed Woodswallows are about and the distinctive calls of the Painted Honeyeater are evident. Many birdwatchers have reported being unable to find any Red-capped Robins at Bartley's Block where they are regularly seen and I have not seen the usual ones on my Depot Road walk. A wombat was sighted crossing Lancashire Gap Road. We have seen evidence of their digging and droppings but as far as is known this is the first sighting.

MID-MONTH MEETING FOR SEPTEMBER: WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 17TH

Please contact me on 0357 261 484 if you are able to come. We need to have another attack on the remaining olives at the Rutherglen block. The eastern section, which we concentrated on at the last visit, is just about clean but the western section requires a little more work to remove the smaller plants. Jan has sprayed the thistles and the Parks crew have dealt with the big Boxthorns. Olives and Cootamundra Wattles continue to be targetted in the Chiltern section of the park. Following the discovery of an big Olive in the reference area Mick, Polly and Helen spent time searching for more and have removed ~40 more, while Jan has also sprayed thistles at the Valley No 2 plantation.

LOOKING BACK IN TIME:

CHILTERN VALLEY NO.2 PLANTATION: In 2006 Friends decided to improve the entrance to Valley No 2 by planting out the weedy, grassy area. Now, six years on, we have a great display of plains flora including Cypress Pine and Buloke surrounded by many species of wattle and understorey plants. We also provided new gates for the block which were installed by Parks who also redesigned the entrance to facilitate safer parking.



A great transformation.



MEMBERSHIP:

Membership has fallen this year so if you have overlooked yours we would be pleased to hear from you. Thank you to everyone who has renewed their membership with us. We are specially appreciative of the support from those who live far away. It is wonderful that you care about this special park and support the work of Friends.

DOES ANYONE KNOW: Richard Hanlon?? Richard joined by E transfer but did not give any contact for newsletters.

FRIENDS CALENDAR FOR 2015

Photo selections are underway for the 2015 calendar. If you have a photo to put forward please send it to me within the next week.

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING SUNDAY OCTOBER 5TH

Meet at the Chiltern Post office at 9.am. BYO lunch, binocs, water and energy. Nest box checking, plus an activity to be decided. Contact in the field 0407 486 480

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RAINFALL

August 44.8 mm over 4 days. Year to date: 424 mm over 29 days

2015 FRIENDS CALENDARS AVAILABLE FROM MID NOVEMBER

The 2015 calendars will cost \$20 plus \$7.20 postage. This is now the flat postage rate for ONE calendar countrywide. This year we have been able to reduce the cost from \$22. For 2 to 3 calendars in same bag (max 3 per bag) add \$5. Please forward your order and cheque to: P.O. Box 60 Chiltern 3683. A limited number will be printed.
I.....enclose payment of \$..... for.....calendar/s
Address:Phone:.....
email:.....

If you wish to use electronic payment the details are:

Acc Name: Friends of Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park

Bank: WAW Credit Union Co-operative Ltd (Cuscal Limited)

BSB number: 803070

Acc number: 81167

Please add your surname to the transaction.

Advise Neville (neville@nrbartlett.com.au) when you have made the payment so that we can keep track of payments

Category

1. Newsletters

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Author

eileen

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