

## Newsletter 233 October 2014

### Description

Dear Friends,

Sunday October the 5th was a disastrous day if you happened to be an olive! Mick had been very busy in the previous two weeks mapping the olive infestations in the Reference Area ready for an all out attack on these dreadful plants. The Reference Area is not often visited as it was mistakenly thought to be woody weed free but this perception has been well and truly dispelled. Ten of us surrounded a huge olive estimated to be ~100 years old and it in turn was surrounded by many hundreds of seedlings and well grown offspring.



It was literally a ‘‘down on knees’’ weeding effort as we parted the grass to pull emerging seedlings before uprooting the larger ones and sawing off the ones too tough to pull. Morning tea was never more welcome! Amazed at what we had achieved Mick directed us to the next patch while he and Phillip dealt with some isolated ones in a far off gully.





All the sites have been mapped and the two we were unable to deal with have been put on hold for another year. Parks will chainsaw and then poison the huge trees the removal of which are beyond our capabilities. These sites will need to be revisited in 2015 to clean up any new plants. One bonus for the day was the beautiful view over the Indigo Valley from the work area. Thankyou Mick for your planning and mapping and also to the great Friends workers.

A few of us stayed on in the afternoon to check some nest boxes only to find them all out of use. Honeysuckle Picnic spot was the afternoon tea venue where we were treated to delicious rum balls made by Stephanie. Neil however thought they were not rummy enough!

## **Freesia and Bridal Creeper infestations**

These were on Wallace's Gully Track, Riley's Road and Howlong Road. Since there was no money allocated for pest plants in the Parks budget Friends decided to pay for the contractor to deal with these pests. Along with a nasty patch of Bridal Creeper on White Box Walk the spraying was undertaken on October 2nd. These sites will need to be re-sprayed in September 2015 when the Freesias are in full bloom to complete the job. Meanwhile the scattered plants will have to be rounded up by Friends.

[Freesia site](#)

## From the ranger's office

Parks are running the fox baiting program in Chiltern Mt Pilot NP which will begin on the 15th of October and continue through until the 17 December 2014. This should have an impact on reducing the numbers of foxes in and around the Park. We thank-you all for your hard work and commitment to the environmental management of the Park in decreasing the number of olives and other pests before they take over. Kris Hermans acting ranger. Rutherglen Block working bee. The plantation was inspected and guards checked and replaced after the high winds. It is pleasing to report that we struggled to get our olive count to 100!! Almost all of these were able to be pulled out. To everyone who has contributed their time and effort to this huge task over the past five years thank you for a job well done.

## Around the Park

The warmer weather has brought the reptiles to life so care needs to be taken while walking through the bush. It is time to look for the Flying Duck Orchids, *Caleana major* and the Tiger Orchids, *Diuris sulphurea*.

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Shrubs *Grevillea alpina* and *Daphne Heath* are in full flower and the huge golden flowers of the *Wedge Pea* are a delight.



All the "Egg and Bacon" species are flowering well and in some spots are quite spectacular. Waxlip Orchids and *Caladenia* species along with Beard and Sun-orchids can all be found. The good recent rains have benefited the park following the spell of very unseasonal warm weather. There have been numerous birding and naturalist groups visiting the park in the last month and all have commented upon the quality of our park bird brochure. Appreciative comments have been received about our website. This one most recently from an orchid enthusiast: "Thanks for putting up a wonderful website, and giving people a place to look at the wonderful orchids of the Mt Pilot area." Ross.

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**Vale Ian Lindner**

Chiltern Landcare in conjunction with Friends had planned to show the film "Healing" in November. Unfortunately the DVD is not available until December 3rd. We may re-schedule the event for December and will notify Friends if that is to happen.

Meet at the Chiltern Post Office at 9.am. BYO lunch, binocs,water and energy. Nest box checking, plus an activity to be decided. If by any chance the weather is cool we may tackle the remaining Olives. Contact in the field 0407 486 480

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/556332777763388/>

Rainfall for September: 68.5 mm over 3 days. Year to date: 501.7 mm over 33 days

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eileen

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