

Newsletter 255 October 2016

## Description

# Friends of Chiltern Mt Pilot NP Newsletter 255 October 2016

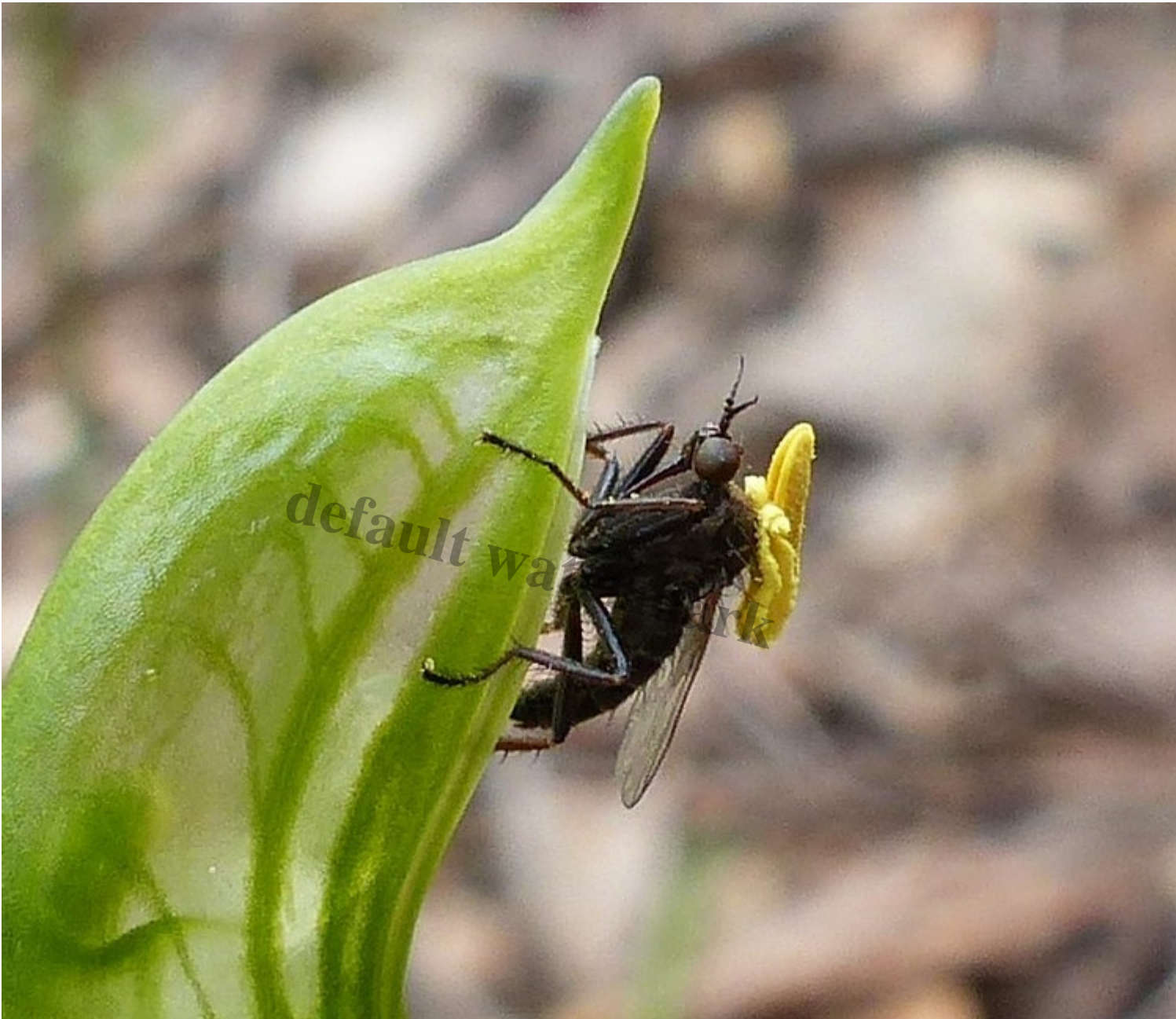
Dear Friends,

Sadly the proposed work for the October meeting was postponed at the last minute and many people were disappointed.

However the day dawned bright and sunny and a few of us took advantage of the break in the rainy days to spend time wandering around. This is the time of the year when insects abound and some stunning records have been made.

Presently there are bees, wasps, bugs and flies on the move as well as droves of mosquitoes. Our photographers have braved the mossie attacks to achieve these amazing photos which I hope you will enjoy. If you have captured an interesting moment in the life of an insect and care to share it please send it to me.

Neil was photographing this *Pterostylis plumosa* when this visitor arrived and stayed long enough for a series of shots.



The insect is a predatory Daggerfly, *Empis* sp and if you look closely you can see its dagger-like proboscis. When first spotted it was inside the orchid and it struggled to get out carrying an amazing load of pollen. It has perhaps a dual role in nature as a predator and accidental pollinator. It also uses its long proboscis to suck up nectar from the flowers and in doing so pollen gets stuck to its body.

Stephanie caught this colourful Black and White-striped Ichneumon Wasp, *Gotra* species. The female finds large cocoons of moths amongst foliage to parasitise. In it she lays a single egg which when it hatches feeds upon the moth.

#### [Black and White Striped Ichneumen wasp of \*Gotra\* species](#)

I caught this handsome Resin Bee, *Megachile ferox* sunning itself on the pamphlet box at Bartley's block. It builds its home in narrow holes in timber and plugs it with resin. This bee is a male and is a

solitary bee. The flattened last segment of its antennae is a diagnostic point.



There are many looper caterpillars of the Geometridae about now and some, like this orange *Chloroclystis filata* enjoy a meal of orchid. This one is feasting on a Maroonhood. When it pupates the emerging moth will be brownish with wavy bands across its wings and about two centimetres in size.



People often ask what the white frothy stuff on foliage is. Well Neil has the answer in this series of photos.

The occupant is a nymph of a leaf-hopper bug. The adult bugs lay eggs in plant tissue. On hatching, the nymph secretes a bubbly mass in which to live. This bubbly mass is thought to prevent dehydration and also to deter parasites.



We removed this nymph from its frothy home and were amazed to see it secreting more bubbles to form a new shelter. It was carefully replaced after photography.

[Spittle Bug](#)

Many more interesting images have been captured and will be added to the website biodiversity gallery.

## Regent Honeyeaters

The last sighting was on Friday 23rd of September. It was blue/blue sighted by Matt Campbell. There is still reasonable White Box flowering along parts of the western entrance to Donchi Hill Rd. Further down Donchi Hill Road where the park boundary abuts farmland and along Bestâ??s Track there is more flowering White Box and many Noisy Friarbirds. Worth a look if you are keen. Please report any regents found. Dean is keen to know the whereabouts of the wild bird that was with the

group.

## Bartley's Block

The water coming off the upper slopes of the block has saturated much of the block. However good birding may be had along the adjacent roadsides. Sacred Kingfishers, Painted Honeyeaters, Babblers and Speckled Warblers were all seen there on September 23rd. The missing birds were Turquoise Parrots.



## 2017 Friends Calendars

These are now being prepared for printing. An order form is at the end of the newsletter.

## Weed report

Friends engaged a contractor to undertake follow-up spraying of the Capeweed at Tuan campsite. After discussion it was decided to have the Vinca at Bartley's block sprayed as well. The latter has

become a daunting task for Friends and we are hoping that after spraying it will become more manageable. The main aim is to prevent further spread. Member Jan has been spraying the thistles at Valley No 2 and is planning another attack on them when the weather permits.

### **From Mick Webster**

Not much happening yet but I am still discovering the odd Cootamundra Wattle in out of the way spots â?? various briars and olives may start re-sprouting soon so will need to be checked. There is also some mopping up of olives and blackberries to be done at Mt Ochertyre bushland reserve. I will be leading an expedition to the Clear Creek Falls area (see photo below) on October 23rd, mostly just exploring but also checking on possible peppercorn infestations. If any Friends are interested in coming along they can contact me. On: 57 261 807 [Waterfall](#)

### **From the rangerâ??s office**

Users are advised that roads in the park are wet and slippery. The Mt Pilot section in particular requires care and users are advised to keep to the main roads and avoid the gutters. The toilets at Woolshed Falls are closed. They were pumped out but have filled with water again and the problem is being tackled. The dumping of rubbish in the park will attract serious penalties. This rubbish recently dumped on Hill Gum Track has been removed by parks staff. Thank you Julian for this report.

[Hill Gum Track September](#)

### **Rainfall for September 113.6 mm**

Year to date: 759.8mm. Rainfall is still going strong in October too!

### **NEXT MONTHLY MEETING SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5TH**

Since the weather has been so unpredictable the activity will depend upon the weather and will be announced closer to the day. BYO lunch, binoculars, repellent, chair and energy. Contact in the field 0407 486 480

### **2017 FRIENDS CALENDARS AVAILABLE FROM MID NOVEMBER**

The 2017 calendars will cost \$20 plus \$ 9.70 postage This is now the flat rate for ONE calendar countrywide and includes the cost of a padded bag.

Postage for 2 to 3 calendars in same bag in Victoria(max 3 per bag) \$14.00

Interstate for 2-3 calendars in same bag (max 3 per bag) \$17.00

Please forward your order and cheque to:

Friends of Chiltern N.P. P.O. Box 60 Chiltern 3683.

A limited number will be printed.

