

Newsletter 273 June 2018

Description

Friends of Chiltern Mt Pilot NP Newsletter 273 June 2018

Dear Friends,

The welcome rains began on May 29th. Now we can look forward to some fungi and early orchids. This month we worked at the Rutherglen Natural Features Reserve checking nest boxes, the Swainsona recta plants, traversing the block seeking out olives and tidying up the guards from the plantings.



Only two of the Swainsonas have survived with one looking robust and the other frail. These are very difficult plants to re-establish in the wild but we will persist. Another batch will be planted in the coming months. Also in the enclosure there were many little rosettes of the dainty Black-tip Greenhoods, *Pterostylis bicolor*. They will flower around September by which time the rosettes will have died off.



After the stray guards were collected we settled down to enjoy a chat, morning tea and bun before tackling the nest boxes and olives. The nest boxes produced some surprises with five of the fourteen boxes showing Tuan occupancy.



Two boxes held Squirrel Gliders, one a nest full of sleepy Sugar Gliders another with honeycomb and a Sugar Glider. I guess you could call that food on tap! One box held a very active bees nest which will be removed.



May and June are the mating months for Tuans and after mating the males die. Males may use the boxes as shelter while seeking females. The home range for a female is around 40 hectares in poor quality habitat. In good habitat it can be as small as 5-8 hectares. High quality habitat typically contains large old trees which provide good foraging.

As we traversed the block olives were uprooted and some persistent stump growth was re-sprayed. The olive tally for the day was in excess of three hundred plants along with three nasty boxthorn plants. We had a very productive and pleasant day out, so thankyou to everyone for their effort.

Birds of the Day

Thanks to Phillip for keeping this list: Eastern Rosella, Jacky Winter, Striated Pardalotes which were very vocal, Scarlet Robin, Australian Raven, Peaceful Dove, also very vocal, White-winged Choughs, Restless Flycatcher, Weebill and White-plumed Honeyeater. A reasonable list given the dry conditions.

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Nasty Observation

On the way home from Sunday's meeting Phillip and I came across a mob of at least fourteen Indian Mynas on the corner of Research Station Road and Chiltern Valley Roads. Noisy Miners and Starlings were also present in the mob.

Around the Park

Despite the recent dry conditions, on one of her walks, Karen Retra recorded a nice specimen of a Red-tip Greenhood, *Pterostylis* sp. aff. *parviflora*.



These orchids flower from April to June. This species does not have a basal rosette at flowering. Another Greenhood that may be found from now until August is the dainty Striped Greenhood, *P. striata*.



Fungi are begining to appear and perhaps the most noticeable is the tall Rooting Skank, *Xerula gigaspora*, formerly known as *Oudemansiella radicata*, featuring a long slender white stem and a brown flat cap which, when fresh, looks as if it has been â??icedâ?•. It is delicate and quite common in gardens and grasslands.



Odd Spot

Anyone who has watched White-plumed Honeyeaters in a mob will know how feisty they can be. But my encounter

with them was nothing short of amazing. On hearing a bird hit my window I found a White Plumed Honeyeater apparently stunned and as I opened the door to retrieve it five agitated White-plumes descended on the hapless bird and proceeded to drag it away.



They dragged it down over the rockery and out towards the paddock. Unfortunately I was unable to follow them so cannot tell whether the medical team revived it. I have seen Noisy Miners and Choughs fussing over one of their kind which had been struck by a car and was still fluttering but they made no attempt to drag it away.

Planting Project at Grasslands

A big project is coming up! Planning is underway for the planting of the 4000 trees and shrubs at Grasslands. This is a Trust for Nature funded project and Friends have contracted to plant the trees and shrubs. The ground has been ripped and sprayed in readiness for the hoped for rains.

The weekend of the August meeting, on the 4th and 5th, has been set aside for this task. We will be needing all hands on deck for this work and there will be a job on the team for everyone. Lunch will be provided on both days. Details will follow closer to the date.

Ranger's Report

The grading program for key roads in the park is progressing and will continue while the weather is suitable.

Birdlife and DELWP were successful in getting funds to undertake 500ha of Noisy Miner control around the Chiltern district.

As in 2014-15, both private and public land will be treated under Authority to Control Wildlife Permits administered through Wildlife and Forest Compliance within DELWP.

The contractor will be undertaking the shooting on behalf of DELWP, Birdlife, Parks Victoria and the private landholders. The control will commence on private land surrounding the park as of 4 June 2018 and will continue until June 22nd. The current plan is for the control to happen in the park from Monday 18 June until Friday 22 June.

Rainfall for May

Rainfall for May 25.4 mm over 3 days. Year to date : 94.3 mm and a dry June is forecast!

Looking Back To Newsletter Number 4 1993

We met at Bartley's Block for an introduction to the park from Glen Johnson. One of our young members, Serena Walsh, penned her thoughts about the day for the newsletter.

At our September meeting Glen from Wodonga came to show us different plants and areas around Bartley's and other places. I marked the list he gave me and I counted 39 different species. I hope I can remember some of them. After lunch we looked at more of the park, then drove to see the regent honeyeaters. Mrs Collins had a cool telescope so we had an excellent view. Mrs. Collins also had a small magnifying lense that we used to look at all sorts of things, it was radical!!! It was an excellent day everyone had terrific time.

Sarina Walsh.

Serena now works with penguins at the Melbourne Aquarium.

After the talk Glen took us for a wildflower walk and and pea identification. Thankyou Tony Marsh for inserting these photos into the relevant newsletter.



NEXT MEETING IS ON SATURDAY JULY 7th

Meet at the Post Office at 9.00am

BYO chair, gloves, lunch, sunscreen, hat and binoculars. Contact in the field 0407 486 480
Details closer to the day.

Membership It's Time To Renew

[Click here for MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL](#)

Membership expires on June 30th. Thank you to all who have taken out membership this year. We hope you will continue your support.

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN-MT PILOT NATIONAL PARK Inc
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Friends have achieved a great deal during the past year. Surveys for plants, birds and monitoring, maintaining and surveying mammal boxes, tree planting, weed control and provision of brochures, interpretive signage and park furniture are just some of our contributions. Your support for our activities is valued and your membership renewal is vital to our cause. Membership expires on June 30th.

Please ensure your contact details are current.

Please find enclosed my membership of \$15 for 2018-19. The fee covers the whole family and includes 11 newsletters.

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If you wish to use electronic payment the details are:

Acc Name: Friends of Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park

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BSB number: 803070

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Please add your surname to the transaction.

Please advise Neville (neville@nrbartlett.com.au) when you have made the payment to help us keep track of payments.

Category

- ## 1. Newsletters

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