

Newsletter 308 August 2021

Description

Friends of Chiltern Mt Pilot NP Newsletter #308 August 2021

Dear Friends,

We have been very fortunate to have been able to have field days for most of this year and the limit of 10 people in a group has meant that a much wider variety of activities have taken place and allowed people to have a choice on the day.

The August field day involved us forming two groups that headed in two completely different directions. The first group headed to the Clear Creek area to tidy up a few Wheel Cactus, visit and admire the Clear Creek Falls, and most of the group ended up at Barry Falls as well. An excellent day of sunshine after a little overnight rain, we lost 3 members but managed to find them all again at various times!

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Morning tea – photo by Mick Webster



An infested Wheel Cactus photo by Mick Webster



Barry Falls – photo by Mick Webster

The second group's task was to remove more woody weeds from the Black Ball Mine Dam Bushland Reserve in Chiltern. Thanks to Murray's portable saw, many of the larger weedy shrubs were removed.

A very large pine has fallen across one of the fences but left two of its branches suspended in a neighbouring tree. The area has been cordoned off by Parks Victoria rangers as the situation is quite unsafe.

We were also treated to a fly-by by some Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos. These birds have become a feature in and around Chiltern in recent times.



Woody weed removal – Photo: Neville Bartlett



Murray with his power saw – Photo: Neville Bartlett



Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoo – Photo: Neville Bartlett

Bird-dung Spider – *Celaenia kinbergi* – Eileen Collins

Here we have a master of camouflage, coloured white, black and shades of brown to cleverly resemble bird dung.

Pictured is the female with her cluster of egg sacs.

This spider is perfectly harmless to humans. However, *Celaenia* means “cruel and grasping”. The adult spider is a night hunter.

The female is equipped with special glands that emit pheromones that are specifically attractive to the male Noctuid moth.

The moth, flies to the source of the scent believing it to be a mate. Once it touches the spider's body it is grabbed by the spiders' spiny legs, crushed and eaten on the spot.

These spiders are not uncommon. They can be found attached to shrubby vegetation.

The juvenile spiders build small wheel-webs in order to catch tiny prey.

At maturity they are able to produce the pheromones and take up ambushing.

Source of information: Spider Watch by Bert Brunet.

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Bird-dung Spider – *Calaenia kinbergi* – adult spider – Photo by Brian Pritchard



Bird-dung Spider with eggs Photo by Sandra Lambert

Friends 2022 Calendar – images required

For some years now we have produced a calendar and there is enthusiasm for us to have one again for 2022. This means that we require images of the park, its flora, fauna and human history. We have previously featured our iconic species and well-known locations, so now it is time to showcase other possibilities. Eileen Collins, Jennifer Davidson and Helen Carse have agreed to act as judges for what gets included, so now we are inviting submission of images.

We are looking for images of scenes, rock formations, water falls, birds, animals, insects, fungi, flora, ruins,

So, if you have any images or suggestions for images, please let us know. We may not have much chance to obtain new images but that simply encourages everyone to look for existing images with fresh eyes.

The deadline for images and suggestions is the end of September (preferably earlier) so that we have time to get the calendar prepared, sent to the printer and available by mid-November.

Around the Park – Neville Bartlett

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The flowering of Bitter Cryptandra (*Cryptandra amara*), just off Rileys Road, has been quite spectacular this year.

Bitter Cryptandra – *Cryptandra amara* – Photo: Mick Webster

This year's main orchid season has kicked off and there are many species coming into bloom.



Blue Fairy – *Cyanicula caerulea* (above) and Emerald Greenhood – *Pterostylis smaragdina* (below) –
Photos: Leshya Perkins



The Golden Wattles (*Acacia pycnantha*) in the areas burnt in December 2015 are spectacular at the

moment.



Andersons Firetrail (above) and Barnawartha depot Road (below) – Photos: Neville Bartlett



Rainfall July 2021: 119 mm. Total for year-to-date 2021: 511 mm. In 2020 we had 495 mm up to the end of July. The average annual rainfall for Chiltern is 689 mm.

NEXT MEETING – SATURDAY 4th SEPTEMBER 2021?

We usually hold our AGM early in September, but this year's AGM has been deferred until at least November and may be conducted via Zoom if necessary.

It is hoped to have a field day on Saturday week but that depends on the current lockdown ending for regional Victoria.

Any activity will be advised a few days beforehand and will depend on the weather forecast and the prevailing COVID-19 restrictions.

Dates for 2021-22

Saturday 4th September, Sunday 3rd October, Saturday 6th November, Sunday 5th December 2021, Sunday 6th February, Saturday 5th March, Sunday 3rd April, Saturday 7th May and Sunday 5th June 2022.

Rule of Thumb: For even months, the field day is held on the first Sunday of the month and for odd months, it is held on the first Saturday of the month.

Membership – It's time to renew

Membership expired on June 30th 2021. Thank you to all who have taken out membership this year. We hope you will continue your support. Friends have achieved a great deal during the past few years. 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 important to our cause.

Please ensure your contact details are current.

Please find enclosed my membership of \$15 for 2021-22. The fee covers the whole family and includes 11 newsletters.

Name:.....

Telephone:.....

Email:..... Receipt required: Yes / No

Address:..... Postcode:

If you wish to use electronic payment the details are:

Account 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.

Please advise treasurer, Tony (Email: anthonymurnane9@gmail.com), when you have made the payment to help us keep track of payments.

Category

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