

Newsletter 313 February 2022

Description

Friends of Chiltern Mt Pilot NP Newsletter #313 February 2022

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN MT-PILOT NATIONAL PARK, Inc.

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Dear Friends,

Over the last few years we have become accustomed to seeing dams such as Cyanide Dam and the larger dams at Bartley's Block in a rather sorry state with very low levels of even completely dry. Despite good rains during the spring of 2021, these storages had not reached their maximum levels.

That has all changed now. The record rainfall of 245mm during January 2022 that included a major downpour or two has now filled all of these dams and swept debris across roads and pathways.

The February field day followed the latest downpour and one group headed off to Bartley's Block to tackle weeds. This group of 10 had a discussion about weed identification with Margaret Considine, then tackled some of the weeds in the area previously filled with Blue Periwinkle (*Vinca* sp.). This was followed by bun from the Chiltern Bakery and a walk around the four dams within the block. After the recent heavy rain, the dams were brimming full – sight that was new to many of us.







Two of the dams on Bartley's Block. Photos: Neville Bartlett

A second group undertook some checking of mammal nest boxes. Mick Webster reports: Excellent first Field day of the year with 17 old and new lovers of the Park. My group of 7 visited 19 mammal nestboxes with very good results – 6 having critters inside (up from 3 in the same boxes last year).



Gliders and their carefully constructed nests. Photos: Mick Webster



Gliders and their carefully constructed nests. Photos: Mick Webster



Gliders and their carefully constructed nests. Photos: Mick Webster

Superb Parrot – *Polytelis swainsonii* – Neville Bartlett

Superb Parrot sightings near the Northern edges of the Park have become more frequent and regular over the last few years. During December 2021, these birds were regularly sighted at a small pool of water just a few metres away from the Northern gate to the Grasslands Block on Fishers Road. Groups of several birds were often sighted and included young birds begging to be fed. This is sure sign that the birds are breeding in the general vicinity.



Superb Parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*). Photos: Neville Bartlett



Superb Parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*). Photos: Neville Bartlett



Superb Parrot (*Polytelis swainsonii*). Photos: Neville Bartlett

While waiting for Superb Parrots to appear, another uncommon species (Grey-crowned Babbler – *Pomatostomus temporalis*) came along.





Grey-crowned Babblers (*Pomatostomus temporalis*). Photos: Neville bartlett

Ranger's Report – Brian Pritchard

The heavy rains in January caused damage to a number of roads and tracks in the park with debris flows filling most culverts and damaging a number of neighbour's fences. We are assessing if we can access insurance funding to repair damage but will need to undertake some remedial works over the coming months.

A number of pigs are still being trapped and removed from the Mt. Pilot Section of the park. There actions underway to deal with long term campers

On the people front, Laura has been extended to backfill for Hannah until June 2023 whilst Hannah undertakes another role in PV. We are currently recruiting to replace Luke who is acting in a Team Leader role until June 2022.

We hope to have the new ranger start in early March.

Two planned burns have been prepared and will be undertaken this Autumn when weather conditions are suitable. One is at Babbler Track near Chiltern and the other on Old Coach Road near Mt Pilot. These burns have been planned and approved as part of DELWP's Joint Fuel management Program.

Additional slashing to remove hazards has been completed at various sites in the park.

We are also working with the group to complete an annual volunteer activity plan and further support to help the group with ParkConnect.

2021 AGM to be held on 5th March 2022

We usually hold our AGM early in September, but the 2021 AGM has been deferred until this year and will now take place at about 12 noon on Saturday 5th March 2022.

Rainfall December 2021: 71 mm. Total for year-to-date 2021: 887 mm (128.7% of annual average). In 2020 we had 778 mm up to the end of December.

The average annual rainfall for Chiltern is 689 mm.

For January 2022: 245 mm compared to January 2021: 113mm. January 2022 was the equal wettest month since 1885 with February 2011 having the same rainfall.

NEXT MEETING – SATURDAY 5th MARCH 2022

The field day activity will involve forming small groups to collect rubbish on roadsides within the Park. This will be part of Clean Up Australia Day activity and will concentrate on the unsealed roads within the Park.

The 2021 AGM will take place at about 12 noon at the Honeyeater Picnic Area.

Please bring a hat and gloves along with your own food, drink and a chair.

Meet at the Chiltern Post Office at 09:00am if you are participating in the clean-up activity or meet at the Honeyeater Picnic Area at 12 noon if you are attending the AGM.

We request that people attending abide by the prevailing COVID-19 advice:

<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/covid-19/directions-issued-by-victorias-chief-health-officer>

Dates for 2022-23

For 2022: Saturday 5th March, Sunday 3rd April, Saturday 7th May, Sunday 5th June, Saturday 2nd

July, Sunday 7th August, Saturday 3rd September, Sunday 1st October, Saturday 5th November and Sunday 4th December.

For 2023: Sunday 5th February, Saturday 4th March, Sunday 2nd April, Saturday 6th May, Sunday 4th June, Saturday 1st July, Sunday 6th August, Saturday 2nd September, Sunday 8th October, Saturday 4th November and Sunday 3rd December 2023.

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.

Category

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