

Newsletter 032 June 1996

Description

Newsletter No. 32 June 1996

Dear Friends

Winter is upon us and as I write this it is raining. Unfortunately it remains very dry in this region so hopefully there will be a good fall this time. The park certainly needs it. The Ironbark flowering has declined, there is some Grey Box in flower and the White Box is just beginning. The *Pterostylis parviflora* are past their best, other Greenhood rosettes and leaves of Sun Orchids are abundant. A very early Golden Wattle was spotted in May and judging by the bud on all Wattle species late winter and spring should be spectacular.

I'm sure you are all aware how Swift Parrots are attracted to White Box. So it is with great delight that we report 100+ in the patch of White Box in the southern block of the park. There are plenty around the park so if you are a Swift Parrot fan why not visit us?

The Regent Honeyeaters are back in force. They seem to prefer the Ironbark areas. Two flocks have been located totalling 43 birds. The challenge now is to keep track of their movements. Visitors to the park should report any sightings to Natasha Schedvin on 1800 621 056

Antechinus in the Ironbark

Antechinus are frequently encountered in the park, usually foraging amongst the ground litter, scurrying over logs or fossicking on the tree trunks. In the middle of the day we watched one as it climbed the trunk of an Ironbark, scampered along the upper branches up to the canopy where it probed the Ironbark blossom.

According to P.Menkhorst, in *Mammals of Victoria*, Antechinus "are known to take nectar from the flowers of a range of shrubs and trees including eucalypts and correas." He also states that no detailed studies of Antechinus' diets have been completed. Like the male Tuan, the male Antechinus dies after a short mating season. Females bear from 10-14 young which are born around August and September.

June activity

Following the Indigo Shire's roadside vegetation reduction work piles of vegetation were left littering the roadsides which pass through the park. Particularly unsightly was the approach to Donkey Hill which leads to the start of the Historic Drive. Friends collected seven trailer loads of wattle from this area and spread it over the reclaimed and ripped area near Depot Road. A load of rubbish, found in the bush nearby, was removed to the tip.

After lunch and a short meeting at Bartley`s we looked for Spurge. Yes, so successful has the Spurge onslaught been that we now have to compete for plants to pull! I guess that`s one of the benefits of persistence. The thistles were also showing the effects of John Reeve`s persistence.

A bag full of garden rubbish containing tomatoes and spent plants, dumped at Bartley`s entrance, was removed. The remainder of the afternoon was devoted to walking and searching for Regents.

The two Genista sites are presently free of seedlings and feral wattles are seldom seen. Five young plants of *Acacia pravissima* {Ovens Wattle} were found growing vigorously along Cyanide Road. Since they were in the gutter it is probable that the seed was introduced via soil from a vehicle tyre. This underlines the need to be aware of which plants are feral and to have them removed before they seed.

From the meeting:

1. Vic roads declined to support the funding of an information sign for the Ironbark Rest Area. However they offered us an A4 size space on an existing board. Discussion with Vic-roads re extra space.
2. The Botanic Guardians grant has been received.
3. Letter sent to VNPA costing for the Chiltern Valley No. 2 re-vegetation project.
4. Insurance: The Friends Network Committee has negotiated an insurance package for Friends groups.

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY JULY 7 9.00AM AT BARTLEY`S BLOCK

ACTIVITY : COVER THE REVEGETATION SITE ON THE HOWLONG ROAD

AFTERNOON WALK LOOKING FOR ORCHIDS, BIRDS AND ANYTHING INTERESTING.

BRING: LUNCH, GLOVES, ENERGY AND ENTHUSIASM. LUNCH AT THE INDIGO CEMETERY.
057 261 484 For further details

Category

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Date Created

2012/06/14

Author

eileen