

Newsletter 049 December 1997

Description

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Dear Friends

Almost three years ago we tackled the exotic plants at Frogs Hollow and created a huge pile for burning. This month we returned to tackle the regrowth and within an hour and a half we had it removed. Small fruit trees, Sweet Briar, a few Hawthorn seedlings, a Fig tree and worst of all 19 plants of the dreaded Genista. There were some Blackberry plants which we left for spraying. There was no evidence of Privet regrowth which was pleasing.

Work was lightened by the antics of a Yellow-footed Antechinus which was foraging amongst the Sedge, running along a log and occasionally jumping up a tree trunk. A Turquoise Parrot made repeated flights over the picnic area and later we came across its nest hollow.

Lunch was enjoyed at Cyanide Dam and was accompanied by entertainment. A pair of Sacred Kingfishers which were feeding young seemed to be making more noise than usual. Suddenly one swooped low to the ground screaming loudly and making a valiant effort to distract a huge Goanna that was ambling across the picnic area. Of course it took no notice and seemed to care less about our presence as it continued in a leisurely fashion until it reached a large Ironbark. It climbed the tree just high enough to be out of reach and posed while several people photographed it. We estimated its length to be 1.6m.- we had a 1.5m tape with us for comparison. When we returned to our lunch table the Goanna returned to the ground and resumed its journey unmolested by the Kingfishers. It's never dull in Chiltern Park!

From the meeting:

1. Neville researched the Global Positioning Systems and purchased one for Friends.
2. Walk track signage: John is awaiting delivery of the posts.
3. Our Vrot data has been forwarded to DNRE. This is part of our involvement in the Botanic Guardians Scheme. Chiltern Park has many significant sites, which underline its importance.
4. It was decided to have material laminated for use in our window display.
5. Measurements for the new display boards were taken.
6. T-shirts continue to sell well. They make good Christmas presents! Polo shirts are also available at \$24.
7. Accounts were passed for payment.

8. Discussion took place regarding special outings for 1998. These would be between meetings. If you are interested please give us your ideas.

9. Programme for 1998. It was decided that only a list of meeting dates would be printed. Activities for the days will be advertised in the newsletters. Hopefully this will make better use of our time and give us more flexibility. We look forward to having our park officially opened; to repeat, in conjunction with Parks Victoria, the October weekend which was so successful and to having evening gatherings with speakers.

Next meeting January 10/11 will be a weekend camp out at Cyanide Dam

Come along and enjoy â??Bats with Natasha Schedvinâ?•

BYO everything {except bats} meet around 2pm Saturday. No work all play!

Please ring to confirm attendance as numbers are limited. Thank you.

Please note: There will be no January newsletter. The February meeting will be on Saturday 7th. Meet at Cyanide Dam at 2pm. Bring gloves, secateurs and tea. There will be an evening walk.

I wish you all a happy and safe Festive Season. I have enjoyed writing the newsletters and keeping you in touch with the park.. Thank you to everyone who has given support this year by working, writing letters, helping financially and giving advice. Thank you Ranger John for your contribution. With your input we achieve so much more. I thank Kaye and her Staff at WAW who print the newsletter in their spare ? time, and WAW Credit Union for their support of Friends of Chiltern.

The GPS â?? A Valuable Tool

The group has recently purchased a Global Positioning System unit {GPS} with with the help of a donation of \$300 from the Albury/Wodonga Environment Centre. The GPS is a unit about the size of a mobile telephone that uses satellites to calculate its current position and display this position, {latitude and longitude} on a small screen. Locations can be pre-entered in sequence so that a visit to a series of nest boxes, for example, is made much easier because the unit will display the heading and distance to the next landmark.

The GPS will also be used to record the location of key sites whether they be nests {RegentH/e, Turquoise Parrots, Owls for example}, logs, boxes, flora or any other special site.

The use of GPS units is becoming quite commonplace as a fairly reliable means of recording key sites and to assist in the location of a spot with known co-ordinates. It is amazing how easily one can miss out in finding the right place due to confusion or misunderstood directions. Because the US military has built some inaccuracy into the system, the GPS unit will not solve all navigational problems but it will certainly assist us to catalogue important sites and make it much easier for novices like myself to assist with nest box maintenance and nest observation. A very special thank you goes to the Albury/Wodonga Environment Centre for the donation that made it possible.

Neville Bartlett.

Thank you Neville for this article and for the time you put into researching the units and making a choice on Friends` behalf.

Note: The balance of funding came from the Regent Honeyeater Grant and the Botanic Guardians grant. Both these areas of research will benefit from the GPS. Members wishing to learn how to use the GPS in order to assist with this work will need to come to meetings.

Category

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Author

eileen

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