

Newsletter 005 November 1993

Description

Dear Friends,

Bartley`s Brewery site, the November venue, had changed considerably since our June gathering. The grass and sedge was over knee high but that didn`t deter eighteen of us from eradicating the remains of the Caper Spurge and removing a host of thistles. The overnight rain had dampened the enthusiasm of the snakes and they remained under cover.

After morning tea we walked across the paddock into the forest. The ever inquisitive Jesse, Sarina and Crystal found trap-door spider holes with the neatly constructed "lids" open. A lifted stone revealed an ants` nest with lots of brown eggs resting in a depression. Lucas remarked, "they look like rice grains" Such imagination. Annoyed at the disturbance the worker ants quickly began to carry their eggs underground so we carefully replaced the stone.

The Grass Trigger plants were in bloom and fell victim to the tricksters both old and young. Tiny Onion Orchids were examined with the hand lens, they too have a mechanism to trap the pollinators, the tongue flips up and traps the insect inside the flower. Simple but effective.

The highlight of the walk came at the end when the call of the Painted Honeyeater was heard and after waiting and watching we all had good views of this rare, nomadic species. It is a striking black and white bird with yellow in the wings and tail and a red bill. It feeds mainly on Mistletoe fruits and this one was located in the Mistletoe. They come to Chiltern in small numbers each year to breed. Like the Regent Honeyeaters they are a prized sighting for "birdos".

Four members undertook to do nest log checking and they joined us before lunch to enjoy the waterbirds on the Land For Wildlife area created by the Griffin family near Valley 1 dam. Among highlights were nesting Red-rumped Parrots, the Ibis rookery with every scrap of space occupied and the Pacific Black Ducks with their ducklings. We were most appreciative of this easy viewing and congratulate the Griffin family for their dedication to environmental restoration.

The swamp at Valley 1 provided excellent views of a pair of Great Crested Grebes. There was obviously plenty of food as they spent quite a while submerged. Hopefully they will breed on the swamp this year.

Lunch and a meeting followed at Valley 2 Dam. A heavy downpour came just as we packed up. Undeterred, five of us went walking hoping to see the Rufous Night-heron. No luck. However the walk was not without its drama. A young Sacred Ibis fell out of its nest into the water and struggled valiantly to stay afloat. Meanwhile two rescuers waded through the murky water, alas, too late to give mouth to mouth resuscitation! Good try boys! The Pied Cormorant young also fell? or jumped into the water, but they could swim, Ibis are waders and have no hope.

Four White-breasted Wood Swallows were seen perching on the dead trees in the water and flying out

to catch insects. They are migratory birds coming south in Summer to breed. Like the Painted Honeyeater they are uncommon visitors.

From the meeting

1. I agreed to continue as Convenor for 1994
2. To cover costs for the newsletter for 1994 the fee will be \$7.00 per family.
3. Scott Jessup has joined the committee to replace David Monahan who is leaving the area.

We offer our best wishes to David and thank him for the work he has done to publicise the value of Chiltern Park.

4. The committee will meet to plan the 1994 programme. It will be sent out with the January newsletter.
5. Beginning with the February meeting, meetings will be held on the FIRST weekend of each month. Days will alternate from Saturday to Sunday. The reason for changing to the first weekend of the month is to avoid clashing with the Warby Friends group.
6. A photo album is being compiled as a record of our activities. Contributions of photos needed.
7. Our bank balance is \$96. Made up of profit from book sales and donations. There are still two diaries to sell and one large wildflower book. They would make nice gifts. Can you help?
8. The first round of monitoring the Turquoise Parrot logs is complete. If you can assist with further monitoring please contact me.
9. Date for JANUARY CAMPOUT is Saturday January 8/9. Place: Cyanide Dam. Time: 6pm. We're hoping for something good in the spotlights!

One of our members has had contact with Judith Wright, poet and environmentalist. Judith has visited Chiltern Park and in her letter she sends, "Good wishes to the Friends of Chiltern. And I do hope you can save the park." Judith Wright is well known for her work with the Queensland Wildlife Preservation and was its patron for many years.

Dorothy Ambrose, one of our Corowa members, is to undergo bypass surgery in the next few weeks. We hope she makes a speedy recovery and is back with us in the new year.

PROJECTS FOR 1994

1. Establish the interpretive trail at the historic Bartley's Brewery site.
2. Plant Yellow Box trees on Pit Road near the Valley 1 Dam to improve the Regent Honeyeater habitat. Valley 1 is an important breeding site and Yellow Box is the nectar provider.
3. Continue the war on weeds and rubbish.

4. Continue the monitoring of plant and bird species. Regularly monitor nest logs.

If you can see something that can be done to improve the park let us have your ideas.

This is the final newsletter for 1993. We have had excellent support from our membership in this our first year. Much good work has been accomplished. We look forward to your support in 1994. The renewal of your membership is vital to our cause. Membership form is attached.

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN PARK MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

P.O.Box 60, Chiltern 3683

Please find enclosed my membership fee of \$7.00 for 1994.

NAME.....Phone.....

ADDRESS.....

Category

1. Newsletters

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