

Newsletter 052 May 1998

Description

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Dear Friends

Following the rain conditions were ideal for our tree planting activity at Depot Dam. Willing hands soon had eighty trees and shrubs planted around the dam. After morning tea of Elephant's Foot and Lisa's goodies we filled the spaces in the reclaimed area. The dry weather, kangaroos and rabbits accounted for half of that planting despite the guards and some watering.

A tour of the Wallace's Gully area through good stands of Ironbark and along Curtain's Road through White Box and Grey Box country was enjoyed. No eucalypts were flowering and birds were scarce. Mt Pleasant Dam provided us with a pleasant lunch spot, again there were few birds and no flowering. During lunch the keen eyes of Philip spotted something he did not recognise. To my delight it was an unusual fungus to add to the Fungi Mapping Programme. Confirmation is required but it appears to be *Geastrum pectinatum*, one of the Earth Stars.

After lunch we took a walk through an area of ridge country which was thick with Cherry Ballart. Interesting observations included a Yellow-footed Antechinus which scampered into its hole when disturbed and proceeded to observe us. We retreated some 10 metres and waited. Sure enough out came the Antechinus.

Bull Ant nests were examined in the hope of finding a different species – without luck. Gary picked up a beer bottle only to discover the remains of a small mouse-like animal trapped inside. The animal is yet to be identified. After stacking scattered rubbish for future removal we proceeded to Greenhill Dam to see how many Regent H/es we could record while having afternoon tea. To Lisa's delight several birds were dipping and drinking. By 5pm we had recorded 8 birds. In all a good day was had by everyone.

From the meeting:

1. The Premier, Mr Kennett is to visit the park on Wednesday May 6. Members able to attend should meet at the Take-a-break Walking Track at 3.45pm. To those reading this be assured that details of the visit were unavailable until the last minute.
2. Regent H/e and Swift Parrot surveys on weekend 9/10 May. 3. Submissions on Draft Management plan close on May 19.
4. Mv. Scott Sec. Gary the Mr Kennett be presented with a Chiltern Park T/shirt. Crd.
5. Accounts were passed for payment. Mv. Scott, sec Lisa. Crd.

The air crash which claimed the lives of six Albury people robbed Friends of members Drs. Lex and Heather Bartram. Both were keen bird observers. Our condolences have been conveyed to the family.

Parks Victoria Appointments.

As from May 18 we will have a new Regional Manager and Chief Ranger.

Chiltern is placed in Central Region. Our Regional Manager is Neil McCarthy. The office will be in Bendigo.

Chief Ranger for Murray Central is Neville Byrne.

Tony Long is now Chief Ranger in charge of Environmental Programs. We look forward to working with this team.

On behalf of all Friends I thank Tony for his support and friendship as our CR and wish him well in his new position which hopefully will involve Chiltern at some stage.

Welcome to Neville Byrne. Neville will need winged feet to cover his huge territory- from Kerang to Wodonga!

Neville is based at Bright and will be travelling between Bright and the Bendigo office quite often. He has worked with National Parks since 1979, mostly in Melbourne. Recreational planning and minimising tourist impact have been part of his work. During the last three years he has been the co-ordinator of the Australian Alpine National Parks Programme. This was a co-operative venture between Victoria, New South Wales, ACT and the Federal Government to consistently manage Alpine National Parks. Neville has a degree in National Parks Management from Canberra University. His interests are in leadership training, bush walking, cross country skiing, cycling and orienteering.

Official opening of the Park.

The Premier, Mr Kennett, unveiled a plaque and declared the Chiltern Box Ironbark National Park open on May 6. The short ceremony took place at the start of the Take-a-break Walking Track near the Chiltern Park Rest Area.

In his speech Mr Kennett acknowledged the concerted campaign to have Chiltern included in the park name. He commended the efforts of volunteers in parks, recognising the contribution they make to Parks Victoria.

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY JUNE 6 AT BARTLEYS BLOCK ON HOWLONG ROAD

We will plant the remainder of the trees, pull some Spurge and Genista. Afternoon walk. Bring trowel, secateurs, gloves, lunch and energy.

REGENT HONEYEATER NEWS

David Geering spent a few days at Chiltern banding some of our birds. 16 more birds now carry coloured leg bands. There are now 31 recently banded Chiltern birds flying around for observers to locate. Should you be lucky enough to see one please try to record its colour bands, location and activity and report it either to David on 1800 621 056 or to me at 0357 262 484. Two birds have been sighted at Baileston Reserve near Rushworth. The flowering is good in that area and there a plenty of other honeyeaters present.

JOIN THE DOTS FOR GREY-CROWNED BABBLERS

Organiser: Doug Robinson

The Join the Dots Programme aims to revegetate the treeless gaps to reconnect isolated Babbler groups.

If you would like to be part of this effort please note the following dates:

July 18-19 August 1-2 Euroa, Violet Town district

July 25-26 August 8-9 Rutherglen and Peechelba district

Self-sufficient volunteers are needed but a shearing shed may be available to sleep in.

TRUST FOR NATURE NEWS

The Trust For Nature is a non profit conservation organisation helping landholders protect significant natural areas in private ownership. The Trust assists by providing habitat advice, running practical field days and conservation covenants.

Covenants provide permanent protection of bushland with covenant conditions being attached to a property title. A property at Mason's Gap Road was purchased last year by the Trust under its new revolving fund. This high conservation value property has since been sold to sympathetic owners with a covenant attached to the title. The Mason's Gap property is important for a number of threatened species. If you have bushland you would like to protect or would like to know more about the Trust's work please contact the North East Regional Co-ordinator, Jim Blackney on 0357 286620.

V.N.P.A. WEEKEND CAMP IN THE RUSHWORTH IRONBARK FOREST MAY 30-31ST

VNPA invites you to explore the beauty of a unique ecosystem and enjoy the Autumn flowering of the largest Box and Ironbark Forest in Victoria. The campsite will be at "The Plantation" at the Dargile Reserve in the forest north of Heathcote. BYO everything.

Further details: Phone Charlie or Teresa at VNPA on 03 9650 8296. I have full details if you are calling locally

BOX-IRONBARK ECOLOGY COURSE 26-30TH OCTOBER 1998

AT WARRRENMANG, PYRENEES RANGES.

A course for land managers, educators, naturalists landholders, local government and those interested in better understanding the ecology of this unique ecosystem.

Course fees: \$550 includes accommodation, meals, course notes, transport during the course and instruction. The course is limited to 25 participants.

Enquiries: Di Marshall, DNRE Flora and Fauna Branch on 03 94124608. email: d.marshall@nre.vic.gov.au

Category

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