

Newsletter 077 August 2000

Description

Dear Friends,

On Sunday 6th of August over a dozen people were involved in checking and erecting nest boxes designed to monitor the presence of Brush-tailed Phascogales or Tuans in the park. The activity was directed at restoring a line of boxes put up by Todd Soderquist some ten years ago. As well as providing extra "hollows" the boxes will enable us to keep an eye on Phascogale numbers so that we know the population is still present in the area.

Phascogale individuals need a territory of approximately 40 hectares in Box-Ironbark forest therefore large areas are required to support a viable population.

One existing box contained a nursery nest where the female raises her young. Barry Traill explained, and we were able to see, the differences between Phascogale, Sugar Glider and Squirrel Glider nests.

A bonus for the afternoon was an excellent sighting of a Square-tailed Kite, one of the state's rarest raptors. The Square-tailed Kite has short legs and, according to Olsen 1995, rarely visits the ground. Its prey consists of nestling birds and it is often seen cruising just above the forest canopy.

Thanks to the keen efforts of the group we replaced 10 aging boxes over the day.

Around the Park:

The park is beginning to spring to life, the wattles are flowering and the orchid leaves are showing. Australia's national floral emblem, Golden Wattle *Acacia pycnantha* is beginning to flower, along with Silver Wattle *A. dealbata* and Varnish Wattle *A. verniciflua*.

The forest floor of the reference area is carpeted with the round green leaves of helmet orchids and various greenhoods have raised their heads including the Dwarf Greenhood *Pterostylis nana* and the Nodding Greenhood *P. nutans*.

The wet forest birds such as the Crimson Rosella, White-naped Honeyeater and King Parrots are now beginning to move back to the cooler, denser forests of the ranges.

The next two months are perhaps the best time to be out enjoying what the park has to offer. Look out for the arrival of the Spring/Summer migrants next month, such as the Rufous Whistler, Sacred Kingfisher and the Woodswallows.

Vale Frank Mitchell

Frank was a member from Corowa. Although unable to work due to ill health he was a generous

supporter of Friends. He looked forward to receiving his newsletter and keeping in touch with the birdlife. Frank enjoyed bringing his sons to the park when they visited from interstate. Our sympathy goes to his wife Marjorie and the family.

A gentleman at rest.

NEXT MEETING: Saturday 2nd September

Meet at the Chiltern Post Office at 9:00am

Bring lunch, gloves binoculars and a friend . As David Geering is unable to present his talk due to other commitments we will finish the clean-up of Brady's Block.

Further information contact Eileen Collins on 0357261 484

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Chiltern Park inc will be held on SUNDAY OCTOBER 1st. in the Senior Citizens' Hall, Conness Street, Chiltern.

The day will begin at 2pm with a walk in the park. Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 2pm. At 5.30pm we will gather at the Senior Citizens' hall for a shared tea to be followed by the AGM and general meeting at 7.15pm

Jim Blackney will be our guest speaker. Jim has been very active with the Trust for Nature and Land for Wildlife organisations. He will present an illustrated talk about his work for these groups.

Details of the catering arrangements will accompany the September newsletter.

Thankyou

I took a break to travel and I would like to thank Scott for producing the newsletter while I was away. Jim Blackney organised the tree planting and nestbox days. Thank you Jim.

Freeway Display

Our display in the Ironbark Rest Area has disappeared, leaving just the bolts in the wall! Vic-roads management informed me that vandalism is a concern at rest areas.

We have permission to place a new display in the remaining frame.

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN NATIONAL PARK Inc

Membership Renewal 2000-2001

My cheque or money order for \$8.00 is enclosed.

Name:

Address:

Telephone

Send to: Friends of Chiltern National Park Inc. PO Box 60, Chiltern VIC 3683

Category

1. Newsletters

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