

## Newsletter 082 February 2001

### Description

Dear Friends

Welcome to the year 2001. Your committee trusts you will find something of interest to you in this year's programme. Programme suggestions are welcome at any time. Despite the rain the weather has not been conducive to pleasant park rambles. However it has encouraged the Stringybark to flower and the first Regent Honeyeater for the year has been reported. A few Musk Lorikeets were seen in the Stringybark. The webs of the Golden Orb spider and Jewel spiders, strung between the understorey, make walking through the bush rather tricky. It would appear by the density of the webs and the size of the "larders" that food is plentiful.

Tree trimming, for safety reasons, is taking place at all the picnic sites. Hopefully the trees will sprout new growth quickly. Ripping of old tracks will take place over the next few months and Friends will assist with the covering of the ground with litter.

On Sunday February 4th we made up a number of wire guards to protect the *Acacia deanei* ssp *deanei* which we planted a year ago. Unfortunately the Swamp Wallabies have a highway through the site and find the young plants a tasty treat. Once the plants reach a metre in height they should be well enough established to cope with trimming if the other plants are a guide. The new plants were grown from seed collected at the site.

Morning tea and a meeting followed at Mt Pleasant Dam. Peaceful Doves, Sacred Kingfisher and a large flock of White-throated needle-tails {formerly Spine-tailed Swifts} kept us interested.

At Bartley's Block we pulled some Caper Spurge which had seed heads ripening. The regeneration of Blakely's Gum and Golden Wattle is gradually transforming the block. The two dams are full following 71mm of rain which fell in two hours at the end of the meeting day.

The Genista sites on the Howlong Road and Cemetery block were inspected. The Howlong Road site will need attention in a month or so while the Cemetery block had relatively few plants which we dealt with on the spot before returning to the Cemetery site for lunch.

On the wetlands around Chiltern Valley No.1 Dam there is plenty of activity. Cormorants and Ibis are breeding and the colonies are very noisy. Young Pacific and White-faced Herons are about and Latham's Snipe can be easily seen in the mornings and evenings.

Snake tales have figured prominently in the press in recent weeks. However mine is a little different. A medium sized Red-bellied Black snake has taken up residence near my back door. One evening the Fairy Wrens were extremely agitated and suspecting our friend was about I went to look. Sure enough there was Red slithering along the garden edge and disappearing into a clump of flowers. As it went into the clump a froglet hopped out onto the grass only to be followed at speed by Red. A short chase ended with Red getting a meal which was devoured head first! A few days later Red shed his skin by the back door.

### Trust For Nature

NewsOn Sunday March 5th at 3.30pm TFN will hold a Nest Box day at Lot 9, Howlong Road, Chiltern.

Guest speaker will be biologist Susie Duncan. There will be a picnic tea and a dusk walk to inspect the nest boxes on the property.

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY MARCH 3RD 9.00AM AT THE POST OFFICE

That's Clean-up Australia Day. Friends will clean up the Howlong Road through the park and tackle more weeds at Bartley's Block. Lunch at Bartley's followed by an afternoon walk. BYO gloves secateurs and lunch.

## Category

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