

Newsletter 084 April 2001

Description

Dear Friends

Great weather, good company, some work and lots of birds made April 1st a great joke free day!

Morning tea was taken at Brady's Reef Bushland Reserve on the Beechworth Road after what seemed a rather long session of weeding and rubbish gathering at two bushland areas on the Rutherglen Road and Cemetery Road. As cars whizzed past we sipped our tea and shared the customary bun while collecting a list of birds.

Before proceeding to the reserve itself we were treated to the sight of Diamond Firetails, Varied Sittellas, White-throated Needletails, Dusky Wood Swallows, Welcome Swallows, Little Lorikeets and Jacky Winters from a flat area next to the road.

A few of us had been to this reserve during 2000 and spent a morning gathering an extensive array of rubbish that had been dumped on the site over many years. Last year's work was certainly far from finished as a few large piles of rubbish required heavy machinery to shift.

But this time we were pleasantly surprised to find that ranger John had arranged for the large heaps of rubbish to be removed and a fence was under construction along the Beechworth Road boundary. This reserve has been spectacularly transformed from a rubbish dump to an excellent place to visit. Well done John and thank you.

Many of the trees were flowering and the list of birds grew rapidly with Golden and Rufous Whistlers, lots more Varied Sittellas, Brown-headed Honeyeaters, a White-throated Gerygone, a Scarlet Robin, Striated Pardalotes, Mistletoebirds, Willy Wagtails and Restless Flycatchers. It has been quite a while since I have been to a spot that afforded so many species in such a short time. As we walked around the reserve we discovered patches of owl wash and the remains of rabbits and we guessed they were the work of a Barking Owl. An alert pair of eyes spotted a large Goanna sunning itself on the trunk of an old gum tree in an adjoining paddock. The tree warrants further investigation as it features a number of well worn and interesting hollows. This reserve requires only a small rubbish gathering exercise to complete the tidy-up and make it one of the gems near Chiltern. Thank you Neville for this report.

Flora and fauna lists have been commenced for both reserves visited and are available on request. Brady's Reserve was indeed full of interest. Many of the birds were feeding on lerp and other insects in the Red Box foliage. The large, strong golden webs of the Orb Weaving Spider were strung between the understorey and judging by the parceled up remains of the victims the spiders had chosen good spots for their traps. A patch of delicate Parson's Bands was found growing amongst grass and Lomandra.

It was well after one o'clock before we settled down for lunch, a meeting and hopefully, Regent

Honeyeaters for company. But you all know what birds are like! Off to the easement, {Pipeline Track}, to try to locate birds seen the previous day. No birds to be found and by now my credibility was being questioned. Back to the dam for a spell, still no birds. Next stop was a spot along Greenhill Road where two birds put on a nice display. Several people went home at this point and the rest of us went back to the dam, after all it was quite a warm day and they surely must drink and bathe!

Five birds, including one banded bird, turned up and one pair put on a great display of synchronised bathing, in together, out together, perch and preen side by side. Couldn't ask for much more. The birds are not very vocal at present and this contributes to the difficulty in finding them.

Orchids noticed were Midge Orchids, Genoplesium sp, and Red-tip Greenhoods, Pterostylis parviflora. These greenhoods have quite small flowers and like the midge orchids are easily passed by. Antechinus have also been taking advantage of the nectar and the first Swift Parrots were seen in late March, which coincided with the cold, rough spell experienced down south.

Processionary caterpillars have been plentiful since the last rain. I timed a procession at a speed of 30 centimetres a minute crossing a track. I imagine they would be slower traveling over leaf litter "off road". The only name for the moth of this caterpillar that I have been able to find is the Bag Shelter Moth. I can find no illustration in any of my references. I do know that they defoliate Golden Wattle, A. pycnantha, in this district. Can anyone help please?

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY MAY 5TH 9.00 AT THE CHILTERN POST OFFICE

Track covering, Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot search. BYO lunch, gloves, rake and energy.

Organiser: Scott Jessup 0357 281 619

Coming Events:

Saturday April 7th Excursion to Mt Samaria. Contact Philip Seely 0260 215 313

Sunday May 12th Visit to Friends of the Warbys. Details May newsletter.

July 14/15 Visit to Yellingbo to see Helmeted Honeyeaters with Bruce Quinn. Times and accommodation details in May newsletter or from 0357 261 484.

All welcome.

Category

1. Newsletters

Date Created

2012/06/21

Author

eileen