

Newsletter 087 July 2001

Description

Dear Friends

The long promised rain began on Friday and paused on Saturday just long enough for us get through the day. Our weeding activities from previous years appeared to have been in vain as we surveyed the even germination and growth of a forest of 20 centimetre tall Spurge plants at Bartley's. Maybe it will be their last hurrah as the spray programme awaits them! Only a few second year plants with seed heads were found and removed. Our new members Tom and Lorraine didn't choose a good day to join our activities but we were glad of extra hands as we tackled the 10 centimetre tall Genista seedlings on the Howlong Road site. I think we are winning the war on this site. The Cemetery and Frogs Hollow sites now only produce scattered plants which are easily controlled.

Morning tea, with a hot cuppa and bun, was shared on Pooley's Track amongst the Ironbarks. The trailer was put to use as we filled it with mostly ancient rubbish which included a very rusty old barrel-type vacuum cleaner! It was disappointing to find two loads of freshly dumped garden rubbish in amongst the wattles and orchids.

The 7 millimetres of rain which fell gently on Friday night freshened everything up. Fungi, mosses and lichens were most noticeable beneficiaries. Old culvert posts were festooned with beard-like lichen which had soaked up the gentle rain. The ground litter was soaked and steps were silent, a change from the crisp litter of recent dry months, and the calls of the Swift Parrots were easily traced.

There were small Forest Mushrooms at Honeyeater Picnic area. Tiny funnel-shaped yellow fungi, *Omphalina chromacea* grew on the bare patches of bank along Cyanide Road.

Christine has found the first of the lovely Tall Greenhoods, *Pterostylis longifolia*, so the other Greenhoods, Nodding, Dwarf and Blunt, won't be far behind them.

Despite the cold conditions lunch was pleasant in the company of the birds. Yellow Robins fought over some mealworms and then perched cheekily on the sapling stems. A large party of Fairy Wrens kept their distance from the Robins and for once the Brown Tree-creepers were rather backward in seeking food. A party of Gang Gangs passed through, flight silent, but their presence given away by their creaky calls. The highlights of lunch were being treated to great dorsal views of a pair of Spotted Pardalotes, their rich colours strangely highlighted by the dull light as they picked scale from saplings beside the table, and seeing three Diamond Firetails feeding quietly amongst ground litter.

After lunch we took a walk up Tower Trail where there was a lot of White Box in flower. Parties of Crimson Rosellas were feeding in the blossoms and the ground below the trees was littered with flower heads. We chatted to some people who had walked the White Box Track. They were delighted to have many Swift Parrots as well as few Turquoise Parrots. Rain began to fall so we made a quick return to the cars and called it a day.

Brady's Block Bushland Reserve. As well as compiling a flora and fauna list for this block a little research into the history of its name was conducted. Brady indeed was quite a villain. He lived in a shack some hundred metres along the Beechworth Road from the reserve. He found gold on the hill which is the reserve. He was a horse thief, robber and murderer. Along with his accomplice James Smith, he terrorised the little community of Wooragee on the night of October 15th 1872 before calling at the Wooragee Pub after hours where he murdered the publican, John Watt. Brady and Smith were later caught and tried. They were executed in Beechworth jail in May 1873. Brady is buried in an unmarked grave in the grounds of the jail.

Farewell to Scott Jessup. Scott has been with Friends since it was reformed in 1993. We thank him for his input into the group, particularly in the early years. A keen birdwatcher, he contributed greatly to the Regent Honeyeater survey work over a period of five years. His contribution to the flora list for the park enabled Friends to publish the flora list last year. His appointment as Manager of the Mary MacKillop Place Museum in Sydney is a great step forward in his career. Congratulations Scott and all the best for your future. We'll save some work for your next visit!

Membership fees are now due.

Diary Dates.

August 4. Ovens & Murray Bird Observers. Killawarra Forest. Contact: Phillip 0260 215 313 or Darren 0260 332 498

August 5. Friends of Chiltern Park AGM. 0357 261 484

August 12. Friends of the Warbys Contact: Helen Curtis 0357 218 937

August 19. Albury/Wodonga Field Nats. Mt Pilot. Contact Matthew Herring: 0260 236 536

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY AUGUST 5 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Meet at 10.00am at the Post Office for a day in the park with our guest, Neville Walsh, eminent botanist from the National Herbarium. The AGM will be held in the Senior Citizens Rooms, Conness Street Chiltern. Meet at the rooms from 5.30pm for tea at 6.15 pm prior to the AGM which will be followed by a guest speaker. All welcome.

To assist with catering please RSVP by July 31.

Category

1. Newsletters

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