

## Newsletter 089 September 2001

### Description

Dear Friends

Several of us braved the cool showery conditions to search for and map the nest logs on Donchi Hill and enjoy a cuppa at the picnic spot overlooking the plain. In the course of traversing the rough terrain of the south east slope of Donchi Hill we received our daily exercise and enjoyed the early orchids. Lots of deep blue Caladenias and little patches of pale pink ones, a few Donkey Orchids, Diuris pardina, Nodding and Dwarf Greenhoods and patches of Acianthus leaves. The heavy grazing by native herbivores was most evident and several groups of Kangaroos were disturbed.

Varnish Wattle has taken over from Golden Wattle as the "shrub spectacular". Skeleton Boundary Track, eastern entrance, is bordered by weeping wattle and all along Lancashire Gap Road the display is stunning. This year the display is the best for many years. Many of the new plants of Grevillea alpina have little sprays of flower, ranging in colour from yellowish orange to deep red. Hardenbergia is trailing along the ground and climbing anything near it in order to show off its magnificent colour. A lovely pink specimen was seen along Greenhill Road.

Each season it's always a treat to see the first of a species in flower. Waxlips, Glossodia major, are just beginning to open, and a few Maroonhoods Pterostylis pedunculata are out. Echidna diggings are plentiful and there are still plenty of Swift Parrots in areas where White Box is flowering. The "first of the species" list also included a very large and slow Red-bellied Black Snake which was out in the rain! Sadly the Regent Honeyeater nest has failed through predation. This pair built three nests and just as the eggs were ready to hatch some little forest critter found the nest. Yes, that's nature but why does it have to happen to a bird which is so scarce?

Despite the continual showery weather the park is still very dry and this is reflected the lack of growth by grasses and in the granitic area of the Reference Area which is usually oozing moisture in winter and spring. The cooler damp weather has produced a range of fungi including the coral fungi and some small patches of jelly fungus.

Last month I mentioned the Truffles found around Cyanide Dam and in several other wet areas. These have been identified by Dr Teresa Lebel, truffle specialist, as Setchielligaster australiensis, Orange truffle and Hydangium carneum, Pink Truffle. Both are common species and the specimens sent to the Herbarium have been retained for the Herbarium collection as they are the first records for Chiltern.

The ECC's Box-Ironbark report is out. Please try to read at least the summary sheet. The report is available from DNRE and Parks Victoria at a cost of \$10.00. It can also be read on the ECC website: [www.nre.vic.gov.au/ecc](http://www.nre.vic.gov.au/ecc)

A local group, Rural People for Parks has been formed to support the recommendations. Susie Duncan is the spokesperson.



Friends, along with other local naturalist clubs are supporting the group.

Box-Ironbark Camp at Paddy's Ranges State Park is on October 6-7. For information and registration phone VNPA on 03 96508296.

Chiltern Ironbark Festival: October 21. Guides may be required for walks and persons to assist with manning the display..

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY OCTOBER 7 AT 9.00AM AT CHILTERN POST OFFICE.

World Habitat Day. We will tackle weeds at three sites, and after lunch look for Swift Parrots, Regents and flowers. Contact :Neville Bartlett 0260 208 632

All welcome and bring a friend.

### **Category**

1. Newsletters

### **Date Created**

2012/06/21

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