

## Newsletter 092 December 2001

### Description

Dear Friends

Cyanide Dam on a mild and overcast day provided a pleasant spot for a relaxing afternoon. Birds were not as obvious as on previous visits most probably due to breeding activities. The usual Superb Fairy Wrens and cheeky Brown Treecreepers kept us company and Brown-headed and Black-chinned Honeyeaters called in the distance. In early spring the Turquoise Parrots were plentiful and easy to find. A walk around the sand heaps turned up one young bird and several others were seen in flight. It appears to have been a good breeding year for these delightful parrots. Notable absentees were the Yellow-tufted Honeyeater parties which gave the breeding Regent Honeyeaters such a hard time in spring.

During the afternoon two visitors from the United States called in to the picnic spot looking for the Friends group. They were in search of the usual Chiltern specialties, White-throated Nightjar, Turquoise Parrot and Painted Honeyeater. It was great to be able to help them in their search.

Tea was enjoyed by a very small group with the raindrops just teasing us. Sadly the promised rain did not eventuate.

The Sitellas which we found building at the depot site last meeting are just about ready to hatch but the Leaden Flycatcher nest did not proceed. A Tawny Frogmouth with two young and a pair of nesting Orioles were good sightings around the dam.

Speaking of Orioles, while walking along Red Box Track early one morning I paused to listen to calls which I thought were from a small raptor only to be attacked by a swooping Oriole giving a hack-hacking call as it ruffled my hair as it completed the first attack! It continued its swooping attacks, hitting the plastic bag I held above my head, until I decided to move on. On the return trip it was at it again! There were two other Orioles present but they just perched in the tree uttering normal Oriole calls. I'd be interested to hear from anyone who has experienced "Oriole attack"

During a walk with the Field Naturalists Group a Brush Cuckoo was sighted. Alerted by the call we tracked it to its perch and had excellent views of it as it gleaned caterpillars from the eucalypt leaves and the low shrubs. It is one of the more unusual birds for this area. Also noted, and unusual summer records, were two immature Golden Whistlers.

Although there is an abundance of ripe Mistletoe fruit there is an absence of Painted Honeyeaters but good numbers of Mistletoe Birds. Perhaps the lack of eucalypt flower is the problem for the Painted Honeyeater or is it really in a state of decline?

From the meeting:

1. A request to Neville Byrne, Chief Ranger, for minimum camping facilities to be provided at Depot has been rejected. Parks Victoria's current focus is on the upgrading or replacement of existing facilities rather than construction of new ones. The provision of camping facilities will be addressed when the plan for the new park is drawn up.

Members found this response unsatisfactory. A simple table, barbeque and pit toilet would be all that is

required to service campers and improve the image of the park.

2. Committee meeting to plan the 2002 programme was set for Monday January 21st 7.30pm.

Please note: There will be no meeting in January

#### NEXT MEETING SUNDAY FEBRUARY 3RD 2002

Meet at Chiltern Post office at 2.30pm with tea at Cyanide Dam at 6.00pm

We will check out the Mt Pleasant block for any further Olive Trees and monitor the effect of the work done in November. Bring: Tea, gloves secateurs, small saw and repellent. Contact: Eileen 57 261 484

I wish everyone a happy Festive Season and a safe, healthy and fulfilling year 2002.

Thankyou to all who have contributed to Friends in 2001 the Park is a better place as a result of your efforts. If you have ideas for the 2002 programme please send them in for inclusion. The next newsletter will be in early February and the 2002 programme will be attached.

Thankyou all, Eileen.

#### Category

1. Newsletters

#### Date Created

2012/06/21

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