

Newsletter 094 March 2002

Description

Dear Friends

A pleasant autumn day after the hot, humid spell, was appreciated by the ten willing hands who turned out for the annual clean up day. Our target, Barambogie Bushland Reserve, is now almost clear of rubbish but the weeds will take some considerable effort on future visits. Most of the rubbish was quite old and consisted of wire, sheets of tin and rusty cans. Each sheet of tin was picked up with the expectation of seeing some reptile under it but there were only a very few ants seen. The woody weeds included Cootamundra Wattle, Peppercorns, {some too large for us to handle} Sweet Briar full of seed, Naked Lady lilies, { the remainder of these we will spray at the leaf stage} and a few fruit trees. Parks staff had sprayed the infestation of blackberries and some of the briar. The southern and western boundaries are very weedy and the challenge will be to prevent them encroaching further into the reserve. In spring we will need to target the Mullein which was obvious by the presence of its seed heads from last season.

Barambogie reserve is well timbered with post mining regrowth of chiefly Blakely's Gum with some Yellow Box. The native understorey is sparse, with Golden, Silver and Varnish Wattle being recorded plus a single robust Blackwood and a few Kurrajongs. The ground cover consisted mainly of sparse grasses, and tall sedge. A visit in spring may reveal some smaller plants.

The bird list was short, Noisy Miners, White-plumed Honeyeaters, 3 Crested Shrike-tits Eastern Rosella, Red-rumped Parrots, Grey Shrike-thrush, White-browed Babbler, Willie Wagtail, Magpie, Little Eagle and Brown Falcon. It is worth noting that Regent Honeyeaters were recorded on this block 3 years ago, feeding in the Yellow Box. There are some very large Yellow Box trees along the roadsides in the area but very little understorey.

As always lunch at Cyanide dam was relaxing after the morning exertion. The dam is very low, now reduced to two pools. A lone Yellow-billed Spoonbill was feeding along the margins of the dam and limping as it moved along. It was later disturbed by some walkers and it was a relief to see that it could fly. A Golden-bronze Cuckoo was feeding in the sapling growth and the resident honeyeaters advertised their presence. After lunch a walk up to All Nations Road produced good sightings of Turquoise Parrots. We looked for any evidence of bud on the eucalypts but found none. The signs are not good so it will be interesting to see if any Regents or Swift Parrots turn up in Chiltern this season.

Kangaroo damage was noted in the last newsletter and was discussed again this month. A letter will be sent to Parks Victoria outlining our concerns in relation to the understorey destruction and the damage to soil under trees where they camp. Friends will be seeking a meeting to discuss the problems with Parks Staff.

Neville has produced and donated another batch of bird lists for which we thank him.

Please note: The date for the December meeting is the 8th. not the 7th. My apologies.

Jean Galbraith Memorial Book "Collins Field Guide to the Wildflowers of SE Australia"

The Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists Club is considering republishing this book which was first published in 1977.

They are seeking expressions of interest from people wishing to purchase a copy before proceeding with the project. The cost is expected to be \$60-\$70. If you are interested in purchasing a copy please contact me on 03 57 261 484

Something to contemplate!

Breaking the Chain of Destruction

In the last 5 years approximately 30,000ha of East Gippsland's forests have been logged out. For almost a decade up to 1 million tonnes of East Gippsland's forests have been made available for wood-chipping each year for as little as 9 cents a tonne! That is less than one dollar for a big Eucalypt tree, some of which are hundreds of years old. See sad cartoon above.

Source: Environment Victoria.

This little extract comes from "Bringing Birds Back" by Greening Australia.

".....One reason why we must bring our native birds back again is simple: there are over 86.000 species of insect in Australia and insectivorous birds provide free, safe and highly effective pest control services.

Healthy bird communities remove half to two-thirds of leaf gobbling insects within tree patches, thereby keeping vital vegetation growing on farms."

" In our hearts and heads we know that to care for birds is to care for our landscapes and ourselves at the same time. perhaps that's why so many landholders today are farming under the influence of birds. They understand that the Red-capped Robin on the wire, the Crested Shrike-tit on the limb, are friends for life.

Inside every tree planter there is bird lover just waiting to get out" Tony Jones Greening Australia.

Bird is the word. Spread the word.

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY APRIL 7 9.00AM at CHILTERN POST OFFICE.

BYO lunch, gloves, secateurs, small saw. Lunch will be at Greenhill Dam

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Category

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