

Newsletter 099 August 2002

Description

Dear Friends

Following the welcome rain Sunday dawned bright and cool. A small group accompanied by visitors from Melbourne visited the Coyle's Trail area where they were hopeful of finding some flowering but found only White Box in bud. After lunch at Honeyeater Picnic area part of White Box walk was searched. The target species, Regent Honeyeaters and Swift Parrots were not found.

However there is always something interesting to be found and this time it was a pellet of a Barking Owl containing small bones and a claw of a bird possibly belonging to a Crimson Rosella. Antechinus are frequently encountered and today was no exception as one offered entertaining views. Antechinus are particularly attractive when seen back lit by the sun as it enhances the lovely rusty brown colouring on their shoulders and their large ears. Birds for the day included Scarlet Robin, Fuscous Honeyeater { these have been absent over the past few months} Weebill, Spotted Pardalote, Little Cuckoo-shrike and Mistletoe Bird.

Around the Park

The rainfall total for July was 35.8mm. The first bright sprays of Golden Wattle, *Acacia pycnantha*, are sprinkled though the park reminding us that spring is not far away. Flower spikes of *Pterostylis longifolia*, the Tall Greenhood can be found along with patches of Nodding Greenhoods, *P. nutans* and some early Tiny Greenhoods, *P. nana*. Lack of rain has meant that the usual array of fungi is absent

Honeyeaters remain scarce due to the absence of flowering, the first Fantailed Cuckoos have arrived and Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes have been seen in parties of up to ten. Black-shouldered Kites have been frequent sightings in the farmland areas. In a few weeks the Flame Robins will be returning to the high country. Turquoise Parrots are frequently seen around Cyanide Dam and a good spot for Diamond Firetails is around Frogs Hollow.

Results of May Regent and Swift Parrot surveys: No Regent Honeyeaters were found in the Victorian survey while the NSW survey turned up 18 birds. This is an extremely disappointing result for the searchers and the birds. 57 Swift Parrots were recorded for the North-east of Victoria however it seems that few if any stayed for the winter.

North of the border notes: An email from Matt Herring detailing the activities of the group searching around Walbundrie notes that they found a group of 17 Swift Parrots feeding in non-flowering Blakeley's Gum and White Box in a 100+ hectare of privately owned remnant vegetation. This underlines the importance of retaining native vegetation. Along an excellent stretch of native roadside vegetation Varied Sitellas, Apostlebirds, Chestnut-rumped Thornbills, a White-winged Triller and loads of Fuscous Honeyeaters! Perhaps that is where the missing birds from Chiltern have relocated to!

For your diary:

1. Friends AGM Saturday August 31st. RSVP by 23 rd to assist with catering
2. Visit by Broken Creek Field Naturalists, August 25th. They would appreciate the company of Friends who are available
3. Canberra Bird Observers are visiting the district on October 4,5,6th
4. Rural People for Parks Picnic at Killawarra: Saturday September 7th from 12pm tp 4pm. Please try to attend and bring your friends to demonstrate support for this very valuable Ironbark Forest
5. Ironbark Festival October 20th. Volunteers needed for manning the Parks display and for guided park walks
6. Vic-group of the Bird Observers' Club will be visiting over Cup Weekend, November 2/3/4 and would appreciate company of Friends
7. Program change: Our guest for the December meeting will be Fleur Stelling. Fleur will offer ideas for seed collecting and talk about the establishment of the north-eastern seed bank

NEXT MEETING ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SATURDAY AUGUST 31ST

Afternoon in the park with David Meagher a Moss and Lichen specialist to be followed by tea, meeting and evening presentation by David. Meet at 1pm at Chiltern Post Office. Tea at the Senior Citizens hall in Conness Street at 6pm to be followed by the meeting and guest speaker. Members are asked to bring food to share. Everyone is welcome so bring a friend.

RSVP by August 23rd to assist with catering arrangements. Enquiries: Eileen 57 261 484

Category

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