



Newsletter 200 October 2011

Description

The October 2011 newsletter is a significant milestone being the 200th produced by the Friends of Chiltern Mt Pilot National Park

Dear Friends,

Our October meeting was part of the Biodiversity Month activities for which we had eight very interested visitors from Queensland and Melbourne. The nest box checking proved a hit with the young visitors who adapted quickly to using the GPS to locate the boxes.





The animals did not disappoint us as excited children discovered sugar and squirrel gliders in several boxes. While walking to the box locations we all enjoyed the wildflowers en route. Fan-tailed Cuckoos, Noisy Friarbirds, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes and Brown Treecreepers were some of the birds seen.

The Chocolate Lilies, which are at their best on warm sunny days, were just beginning to flower having been slowed up this year by the cool and overcast weather. Morning tea along with a chat was taken on All Nations Road and two sticky buns disappeared quite quickly.

After lunch at Honeyeater Picnic Area John took us to Muffler Road where we found a good selection of Blunt Greenhoods and Gnat Orchids, some Waxlips and tiny Beard Orchids.





unning.

The next wave of flowers will include the lovely blue Diggers Speedwell, Dainty Hoary Sunray, Hooded and Musky Caladenias and the tall Tiger orchid Diuris sulphurea.

Around the park

The best birding continues to be at Bartley's Block early in the morning. Painted and Scarlet Honeyeaters, Speckled Warblers, Turquoise Parrots, Quail and Yellow Thornbills may be encountered. The Regents seem to have left the park. Many birds are breeding including Little Cuckoo-shrikes, Fuscous and Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters and White-winged Choughs. The valley dams are rather quiet but Pink-eared Ducks can be found at Valley No 1 along with a wide variety of waterbirds on the adjacent swampy area. Recently a Baillon's Crake was spotted in the swamp along the edge of the reeds. Along the track to the bird hide at Valley No 2 Diamond Firetails are plentiful.

The young eucalypts are hosting large numbers of Spitfires, the larvae of the Saw Fly. When disturbed they emit a yellow liquid which smells of eucalyptus. The adult form of these 'flies' is actually a wasp.

Interesting behaviour of a Raven: While watching birds at Bartley's our attention focused on a Raven

behaving oddly. At intervals it would fly up to the lower branches of a Cherry Ballart and we thought 'Oh there goes some poor bird's nest' On investigation we found no bird nest but noticed the red fruits on the Cherry Ballart. We deduced that as the raven flew up each time it took a fruit. A lot of effort for



Rainfall: September 61.6 mm over 7 days. Yearly total to date: 747.8 mm over 77 days

NEXT MEETING : SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5TH

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9.00am BYO lunch, binocs, chair. Morning activity working at Tuan campsite; lunch at Chiltern Valley No 2 birdhide where we will do some weeding of the landscaped area and enjoy the waterbirds. Contact in the field: Eileen 0407 486 480 or 0357 261 484

TOOLS: secateurs, rake, trowel, shovel.....all will be useful also gloves and repellent.

2012 FRIENDS CALENDARS AVAILABLE FROM NOVEMBER 21ST...

The 2012 calendars will cost \$22 plus Victorian postage of \$8.35 (includes a padded bag). NSW postage \$10.35. For 2 to 3 calendars in same bag add \$4.00 Please forward your order and cheque to:

P.O. Box 60 Chiltern 3683. A limited number will be printed.

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Author

eileen

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