

Newsletter 225 February 2014

Description

Dear Friends,

Welcome to 2014. Summer made its presence felt in January with temperatures well into the 40's. As I write there is some relief from the threat of fires as a band of heavy rain lies over us. I can now tell you we had 26mm, surrounding areas did a little better than Chiltern but we will not complain.

CANCELLATION OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING

Due to the forecast temperature for Sunday in the high thirties the committee decided to cancel the meeting.

Hopefully we will all meet on March 1st to begin the year's activities.

Summer in the Park

Summer in the park had plenty to offer despite the weather. Wattles were brightening the scene and mistletoes were flowering. The tall weeping, cream flowered Lightwood, Acacia implexa flowered spectacularly while the less spectacular Golden Wattle look-a-like, Drooping Wattle, Acacia difformis put on quite a show in some areas.

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Two mistletoe species are flowering at present. The brightly coloured upright flowers of Fleshy Mistletoe, *Amyema miraculosa* growing on top of the Box Mistletoe are attracting honeyeaters and the less common Creeping Mistletoe, *Muellerina eucalytpoides*, the flowers of which are somewhat insignificant in comparison.



In the Mt Pilot section of the park a walk along Settler's Rd produced Silver Banksias, *B marginata* setting seed, the freshly set ones being quite attractive. Wildlife was also interesting. Disturbing a huge Koala on the ground, we stood astounded as it literally sprinted up a gum tree! The web pic was captured by Joseph and clearly shows a startled pose.



Insect life seems variable. Jan reports that butterflies are not as abundant this season, and I am seeing fewer moths. However Potter and Mud Daubing Wasps are very active producing quite a variety of intricate nests.

The big mud structures of the larger wasps on walls and bark of trees are obvious, however, the small Potter Wasps are masters of mini constructions, making amazing spherical nests in which to place their eggs. They prey on caterpillars, paralyse them and carry them to to the nest where they lay an egg on them. The nest is sealed and the hatching larvae feed on the paralysed caterpillar.





Small Grants Application

The results of the applications are still not available. They are supposed to be out in the next few days but we were told that before Christmas! We are still in with a chance.

Calendars

were sold out this year. A great result and thankyou to all who supported this project. Keep seeking for a photo to submit for the 2015 edition!

Rainfall

December 55.8 mm over 4 days. Year to date: 667.8 mm over 58 days

NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY MARCH 1ST

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9.00AM. Byo lunch, drink,binocs, chair etc. The activity will be decided closer to the

day and will be suited to the weather conditons.. Contact in the field : Eileen 0407 486 480

Recent publications

“A Guide to the Beetles of Australia” by George Hangay and Paul Zborowski, published by CSIRO

Excellent illustrations and informative text. If you are interested in beetles this may be for you. \$49.95

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