

# FRIENDS OF CHILTERN MT-PILOT NATIONAL PARK, Inc.

President: Vacant

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Website: <http://www.friendsofchiltern.org.au/>

## March Field Day

An excellent roll up of 16 people that included some of whom had not been able to come for quite some time. It was great to have them back again. The tasks for the morning included weeding at Bartley's block. Our first target was the crop of seedlings of Blue Periwinkle (*Vinca major*). Several years ago an expanding infestation of this plant was removed via spraying. The area previously occupied by the vinca has been sown with sedges and grasses that are currently doing very well along with some self-sown eucalypts. Removal of the vinca seedlings is something that we will need to do for a while yet but we feel that we are getting on top of the unwanted regrowth.



The once bare area that is now doing very well (left) and a vinca seedling (right). Photos: Neville Bartlett

Our other challenge is the ongoing removal of Caper Spurge (*Euphorbia lathyris*) plants. Friends have been pulling out plants at this site for decades and we are managing to control the spread of this plant without being able to get the upper hand and win the battle.



A mature Caper Spurge plant (left) and a Horehound plant with Horehound Shield Bugs (right).  
Photos: Neville Bartlett

The weeding was followed by morning tea and an encounter with a couple of bird watchers from the UK.

## Autumn Orchids in the Park – Neil Blair

Orchids are found in the Park in all four seasons, not just in Spring. The most apparent autumn orchids in the Park are the Large Autumn Greenhood (*Pterostylis ampliata*), the Inland Red-tipped Greenhood (*Pterostylis rubescens*) and Parson's Bands (*Eriochilus cucullatus*).



A Large Autumn Greenhood flower (left) and foliage (right). Photos: Neil Blair



Parson's Bands flowers (left) and foliage (right). Photos: Neil Blair

All have interesting leaf development. The *Pterostylis* species have leaves forming a basal rosette and are known as radical leaves i.e.. they arise directly from the root and surface separately from the flower stem although they may cluster around it. The leaf of *Eriochilus cucullatus* sheaths the flower stem but is usually undeveloped at flowering time, becoming apparent before and after fruiting.

There will be an opportunity to look at these orchids as part of the Friends April 7<sup>th</sup> outing. All interested persons are welcome to join us.

## Rangers' Report – Scott Cunningham

The Easter holidays time is traditionally our busiest time for camping and rangers are patrolling to manage and provide education to park users.

With the start of Autumn, illegal firewood take from the park is increasing, any sightings of recently felled trees or removal of firewood can be reported through Parks info number; 13 19 63.

Recruitment for the ongoing ranger position has commenced with interviews to be conducted after Easter.

## *Laetiporus portentosus* – March image in the 2024 calendar

Fungi form a vital part of the biological framework in the environment. They convert nutrients in the soil into glycogen that can be used by themselves, plants, microbes and other organisms in the soil.



*Laetiporus portentosus*. Photo: Alison Pouliot

## Off Grid Festival - Chiltern

Saturday & Sunday 6th - 7th April 2024, 9am - 5pm Chiltern Racecourse and Recreation Reserve

A diverse array of products, services, skills & knowledge sharing in areas of sustainable, alternative, off the grid and eco-living. Learn to live off the grid, become self-sufficient and lower your carbon footprint. From electric vehicles & latest technology to traditional skills & homesteading.

[Book here.](#)

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**Rainfall** February 2024: 67 mm. Total for the year-to-date 2024: 112 mm. The corresponding total up to the end of February 2023 was 134 mm.

The average annual rainfall for Chiltern is 689 mm.

Data supplied by Mick Webster.

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**NEXT MEETING – SUNDAY 7<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2024**

The day will be a wildflower walk led by Neil Blair (see article above). Everyone is welcome.

Meet at the Chiltern Post Office at 9:00am.

**NOTE:** Daylight saving ends in the early hours of Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April.

Please bring suitable footwear, sun protection and morning tea.

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**Remaining dates for 2024 and 2025**

**For 2024:** Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May, Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August, Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September, Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October, Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November and Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2024.

**For 2025:** Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February, Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> March, Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April, Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June, Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July, Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> August, Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September, Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> October, Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November and Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2025.

**Rule of Thumb:** For even months, the field day is held on the first Sunday of the month and for odd months, it is held on the first Saturday of the month.

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