

Newsletter 080 November 2000

Description

Dear Friends

Please note the change of website address. This unusually wet spring has enhanced the life of many plants and delayed the flowering of others. Blue pincushions, *Brunonia australis* normally in full flower in early November is still in bud, delicate Finger Flower, *Cheiranthra cyanea* is keeping its colour well under the cool moist conditions and the tall Tiger Orchids, *Diuris sulphurea* are still crisp and fresh.

An exciting and uncommon find for Chiltern was a patch of Sickie Greenhoods, *Pterostylis falcata*. In previous years only one or two plants flowered but the really wet conditions brought about an explosion of flowers and ~200 plants were counted. Sickie Greenhoods are fairly common in the wet areas of Mt Pilot Park however we have only one known site in Chiltern.

Patches of late flowering Ironbark are attracting honeyeaters. To locate flowering trees simply listen for the raucous calls of the Noisy Friar-bird. Although the Red Box is in heavy flower the birds are not using it. One pair of Regent Honeyeaters has successfully reared one chick despite the wet conditions. Just where they are this year is a mystery. Hopefully they are breeding somewhere.

Friends helped out at the Trust for Nature open day when the Payne property on Mason's Gap Road was opened. Twenty-four people visited the property and many of them also visited the Trust property, Lot 9 on the Chiltern Howlong Road and the National Park.

The Victorian Field Naturalists' Club held their annual camp at Howlong. One day was spent in the park and members acted as guides.

The Ironbark Festival was held on October 15th. Parks Victoria had a display centre and Friends assisted with the manning of it. Cycle rides and walks were popular. Thanks to Friends members who helped out on these three occasions.

Our visit to Hattah-Kulkyne National Park proved a great way to spend cup weekend. There were plenty of new birds for the birdos. Some Mallee was in flower and attracting Striped, White-fronted and Pied Honeyeaters. Best birds for the weekend were Striated Grasswren and the delightful little Mallee Emu-wren. Our quest for the Red-lored Whistler was unsuccessful, perhaps next time?

On a little hill just at the edge of Ouyen we discovered a patch of *Eremophila* in flower and that became the evening haunt to enjoy Singing, Yellow-plumed, Pied and Black Honeyeaters and hundreds of extremely noisy White-browed Woodswallows. I found out later that the name of the hill was Ticklebellie Hill and was a well known birding spot. Sadly this rich bush area was full of rubbish and Bridal Creeper. It begs for a Friends group!

Speaking of weeds, Genista, English Broom, Gorse and Chilean Needle Grass are rearing their ugly heads again. The Lancashire Gap Road has been cleared of Broom and Gorse but the Genista on the shire roadsides continues to be a problem and Chilean Needle Grass is thriving.

Proposal to hold an over night camp out in the Mount Pilot Park in January.

If you are interested in taking part please contact me as soon as possible. At this stage it will probably be held on either the weekend of January 6/7 or 13/14

NEXT MEETING SUNDAY DECEMBER 3RD

Meet at the Chiltern Post Office at 4pm.

We will be walking Wallace`s Gully Track, having a shared tea at the Depot Dam followed by a search for Bush Stone-curlews, Apostle-birds and Grey-crowned Babblers

BYO Everything

Category

1. Newsletters

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