



Newsletter 031 May 1996

Description

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN PARK
Convenor E.Collins 060 261 484
Newsletter No. 31 May 1996

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Dear Friends,

The much needed rain arrived on our last meeting day. On reflection we have had only two wet meeting days in three years and on both days we have accomplished part of our programme and shared lunch. This time we lunched at the Ironbark Rest Area on the Hume Freeway where we were deafened by the calls of the Noisy Friar-birds. The Ironbark flowering around that area is spectacular and birdlife is abundant.

What did we do in the rain? Further cleaning up in Wallace's Gully, searched for orchids, Swift Parrots and Regent Honeyeaters.

What did we find? Plenty of stuff to pick up, no Regent Honeyeaters, twelve Swift Parrots feeding in the Ironbark blossom some *Pterostylis parvijiora* and lots of orchid rosettes promising flowers in the coming months.

John has been on the 'Roo trail again and here is his report.

OUR KANGAROOS LOVE GRAZING OATS

At the 5th Eastern Grey Kangaroo count conducted by 'Friends' in mid-April 1996, 258 kangaroos and three Black Wallabies were counted along with three hares and a wounded fox. Distribution was very similar to the January observations but the largest concentration was 52 in and near an oat crop adjoining the eastern boundary of the northern block. All animals were looking well especially the primary school joeys which move extremely fast, even though their sense of direction and common sense leaves much room for improvement.

N.B. John is the only 'Friend' who does this quarterly trek and we thank him for his perseverance. The Park Name.

We don't want to be stuck with 'The Box and Ironbark National Park'. Locally, Friends are writing to the Minister, Commissioners, Politicians, National Trust and the Heritage Commission. We hope members from farther afield will support us by writing letters to

appropriate people seeking support for the inclusion of CHILTERN in the name

From the Meeting

Friends voted to send \$100 to the VNPA campaign for Box/Ironbark country. This money will come from funds raised through can sales and a trading table.

2. Land Conservation Council Investigation of B/I in N.E.Victoria. Friends have registered their interest and willingness to have input.

3. "Tuan Talk", a newsletter from VNPA's campaign office was well received.

4. An offer of finance from VNPA to carry out a promotion project was discussed. Finding a suitable activity to involve many people, focus on a threatened species and undertake in the immediate future, was a challenge. A decision was made to carry out a tree planting and wetland revegetation project at Chiltern Valley No 2 Dam, to be undertaken in September if acceptable to VNPA and Ranger, John McDonald.

5. The grant from the Regent Honeyeater Recovery Programme has been paid to the Friends account.

6. Letter has been sent to Vic-Roads seeking funds to erect an information board at the Ironbark Rest Area. The board will present information about the park and Box and Ironbark values.

7. The marauding, bird-eating feline has been caught!

8. Regent Honeyeater surveys continue. The birds are scarce but the blossom is not. Any answers?

9. Friends have been assisting with a visitor survey this year. Interest in the historic sites is high and picnicking, bushwalking, bird watching, cycling and horse riding are popular activities. White Box Walk is very popular. Frequent requests are received for locations of particular bird species, many come from overseas visitors. Yes, it is a great place. Have you visited the park lately?

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY JUNE 1

MEET AT DEPOT ROAD RUTHERGLEN ROAD JUNCTION

TIME: 9.00

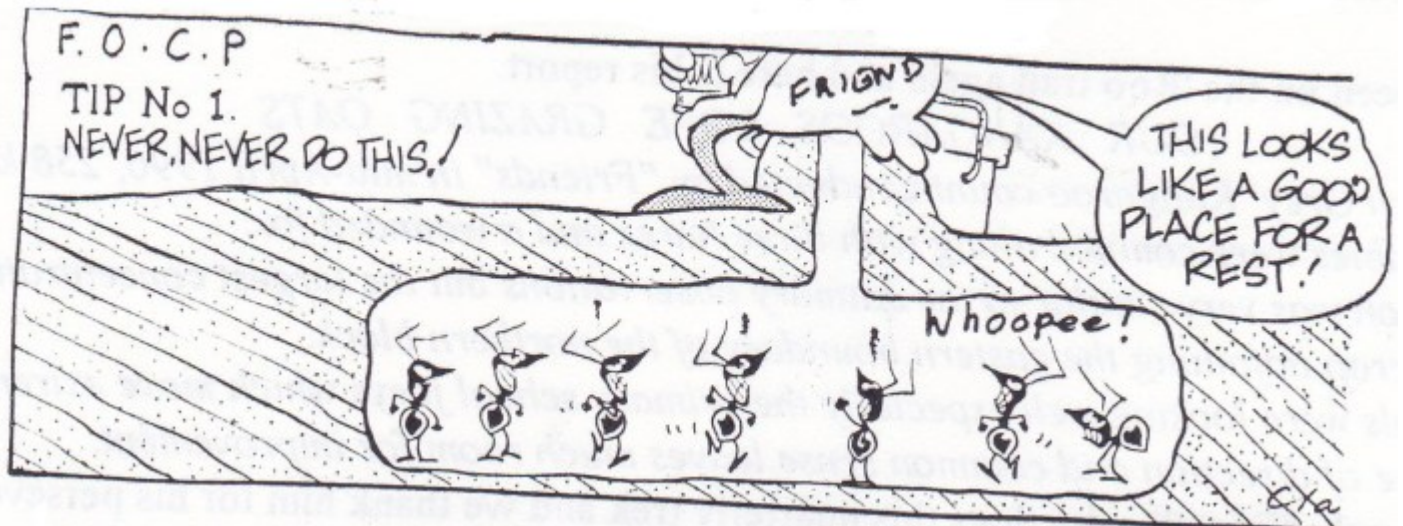
We will make our third effort to cover the revegetation area. Bring a trailer if you have one. Gloves, morning tea, lunch and energy. Lunch at 12.00 at BARTLEYS. Followed by afternoon walk.

ANTS: EARTHWORMS OF THE BOX AND IRONBARK FORESTS

Bert Candusjo Curator at the Insectarium of Victoria writes that "earthworms are not well represented in soil within forests of central Victoria and so this particular habitat is dominated by the Formicidae or ants."

Anyone who has observed ants at work will have noticed the excavated soil particles deposited above the ground. This activity improves the soil structure. Bert informs readers that "the nesting tunnels of ants can extend to as much as ten metres below ground level." It is easy to understand why they are so valuable in our forests in the absence of earthworms

More information about the role of invertebrates in Box and Ironbark Forests can be found in Bert's interesting article entitled "Ecology of Forest Invertebrates in Central Victoria", in Park Watch March 1996. In the meantime take care to observe the F.O.C.P. Ant tip!



FRIENDS OF CHILTERN PARK MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL.

PO. BOX 60 CHILTBRN 3683

Please find enclosed my membership, of \$7.00 for 1996-1997 The fee covers the whole family.

Name

Phone

Address

The renewal of your membership is vital to our cause. Thank you for caring.

We look forward to official recognition of National Park status.

This newsletter is Printed by W.A.W. Credit Union. Their support is greatly valued.

Category

1. Newsletters

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