

Newsletter 104 February 2003

Description

Dear Friends

The February Friends' day was indeed an unusual one. The recent bushfires in the area had affected many members by virtue of having a close call with disaster without anyone suffering any losses. Smoky conditions much like moderate and persistent fog had been present for over two weeks and this day was no exception. An excellent roll-up of members formed into a convoy and headed off into the park with a list of tasks to perform.

Kangaroos had been camping in and around a small patch of *Acacia deanei* ssp *deanei* near the old Indigo Cemetery so our first task was to find the site and then place dead branches and limbs of golden wattles around the *Acacia deanei*. The plentiful supply of dead material made this task rather easy and we all hoped that some good rains would invigorate the *Acacia deanei* and encourage it to flourish once again. Next stop was at the genista sites on Howlong Road and here it was evident that the drought was making it difficult for such weeds. Very few specimens were to be found and these were quickly dispatched. One group of people checked out Bartleys Block nearby and came back with similar news about the weeds there. No live genista was to be found at the re-vegetation site on Howlong Road. There we paused and listened to the Little Lorikeets busily feeding on Mistletoe and a very small amount of eucalypt blossom that Susie observed on a few hybrid trees. Next we travelled onto Magenta where we had the monthly meeting while partaking of morning tea. A large flock of Woodswallows (presumably, White-browed) wheeled overhead while the meeting progressed. Then it was off back towards the easement looking for some broom bushes that needed to be removed. It took a while to find them but their end came quickly. More Little Lorikeets and various honeyeaters (Brown-headed, Black-chinned, Yellow-tufted and Fuscous) were busy near the easement. Everyone wandered back to Magenta and decided that it was time to retreat back to our homes and out of the smoke.

Thank you Neville for your account of the day's events.

Mistletoe: Two species are in flower at present, Box Mistletoe, *Amyema miquelii* and Fleshy Mistletoe, *Amyema mirabilosa* ssp *boormanii*. The Box Mistletoe is the large drooping plant with pendulous red and orange flowers and rusty coloured leaves while the Fleshy Mistletoe has bright red upright flowers and thick green leaves. It is parasitic on the Box Mistletoe. It is good that there is something in the park providing food for a few birds.

Request for funding assistance: Fleur Stelling, NE Community Seedbank Coordinator has requested a contribution from the group to facilitate the purchase of a Bandicoot Native Grass Seed Harvester. The cost of the harvester is around \$12,000. Members may like to consider this request prior to the next meeting.

From Victorian Field Nats Newsletter: Jack Crow of the Keith Turnbull Research Institute described plans for limiting the sale of invasive plants that can become troublesome weeds in Victoria. The new Pest Plant Distribution Strategy is concerned about limiting the spread of plants that may impact on primary production, the environment or on public health. The list of possibly 600 or so plants to be included in the legislation is being developed at the present time. Many of them will be bulbs, vines or aquatics.

Anyone who has removed noxious and environmental weeds will surely welcome this strategy.

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY MARCH 1ST 9.00am CHILTERN POST OFFICE

Clean-up Australia Day. Targeting the Howlong and Rutherglen Roads through the park.

BYO Lunch, hat and sunscreen.

Category

1. Newsletters

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