

Newsletter 127 March 2005

## Description

**Dear Friends,**

Following a cold, windy and wet Saturday, much to our relief Sunday dawned cool, calm and sunny. A small band gathered to tackle the privet on Lancashire Gap Road. No saws and paste were required as the plants pulled easily from the soft damp ground. Some of the lateral roots stretched for over a metre just under the surface and due to the friable soil they had little purchase. It is some ten years since we dealt with the thicket of privet on that site and growth since then has been very slow. Unusual for a weed!

Since that job was quickly completed we decided to have morning tea at Bartley's Block, inspect the Genista sites on the Howlong Road and clean up the stretch from Bartley's to the northern boundary. Morning tea entertainment as usual consisted of a party of Turquoise Parrots, which seem to be plentiful everywhere following the good season, Jacky Winters, squabbling Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters and the calls of the Spotted Pardalote.

The walk along the Howlong Road to the weed sites was spoiled by the amount of litter we had to collect. General litter of bottles, cans, Muck-Donald's cartons, bits of car debris. The most useful piece was a decent sized stainless steel bowl. The minehole Genista site only produced 25 small plants. Mindful of the fact that pulling has been going on for 12 years we contemplated how much seed was left to sprout! None of the Genista sites we monitor has been allowed to set seed! Scary isn't it? The big patch at the re-vegetation site yielded 180 small plants which were easily pulled. With our rubbish in tow we decided it was time for lunch at Greenhill Dam. Bird sound was all around us but sightings were few. Lovely piping of the Yellow Robin and 'sleep baby' calls of the Spotted Pardalote were constant. Screeching Little Lorikeets flew overhead like little arrows. There is no eucalypt blossom around the dam at present but there is promising looking bud so we can be hopeful. After a brief meeting it was decided to walk to Magenta Mine, returning along the little bush track and down the pipeline. Along Battery Hill Road there was quite a bit of Grey Box in flower attracting small flocks of Brown-headed Honeyeaters, some Yellow-tufted H/e and the odd Fuscous Honeyeater. A large noisy group of White-winged Choughs was foraging in the litter in the adjacent paddock and Rufous Whistlers were in fine feather and voice. An aggressive Willie Wagtail was giving two Jacky Winters a hard time. We looked hard for Robins but found none however the surprise was a good sighting of a Painted Button-quail which we practically walked on! The Ironbarks around Magenta Mine looked magnificent but there was not a sound of a bird. The trees were heavy with last year's fruits and new bud was hard to find. Along the bush track we found Long-leafed Box in flower but nothing using it. Throughout the walk we noted good bud on the Stringybarks. The Grevillea Alpina was thick and should be a treat in spring both for us and the birds. Few fungi were seen but after the rain the mosses were fresh and the lichens soft.

The fate of the dead Koala at Cyanide Dam was to be eaten by a large Goanna! Nature at work.

## From the meeting:

1. Affiliation renewal for Environment Victoria was passed.
  2. We discussed a request to do some Olive removal on the new United Mine bushland reserve. Neville and Eileen will inspect the block to see what is required.
  3. It was decided to apply for a Parks Victoria Community Grant to erect a Wetlands Interpretation Board at Lake Anderson. This project was put on hold as funding was unavailable last year.
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Rainfall: February: 177.4mm over 9 days. Yearly total: 227.2mm over 15 days. Great start to the year.

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NEXT MEETING SATURDAY APRIL 1ST

9.00am at Chiltern Post office. Nest box monitoring on the north side of the park.

BYO gloves, binoculars, lunch, chair and repellent.

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### Category

1. Newsletters

### Date Created

2012/06/22

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