

Newsletter 132 August 2005

Description

Dear Friends,

After a wet week the weekend was fine, calm and cool which made pleasant conditions for our afternoon walk. The chosen spot for the afternoon was Donchi Hill where we split into two groups and headed off in opposite directions seeking Swift Parrots. Although they had been frequenting the area for a couple of months none were recorded. However several small groups were found in the southern block on the following day so they are still around. Two habitats were selected for the walk, one along the ridge and the other along the lower track into the grey box area. As expected the bird species recorded were different. In the grey box habitat there were White-plumed, Fuscous and Brown-headed Honeyeaters, Brown Treecreepers, Hooded Robins, Willie Wagtails and strangely enough a Boobook Owl. Our attention was drawn to an agitated Hooded Robin, higher up in the trees than expected, and a White-plumed Honeyeater both flying at a the trunk of a box tree. After much scanning the object of their distress, the Boobook, was seen comfortably resting in a crevice of the tree and seemingly nothing was going to move it. It's always exciting to find an owl in the daytime. Some patches of Bridal Creeper were noted on the lower track and these will be removed. Back at the meeting place notes were compared. The ridge group listed Dusky Woodswallows, Mistletoebird, Weebills and Little Thornbills, Yellow-footed Antechinus, Black Wallaby and Kangaroo.

Together we walked the Peake's Track circuit finding Painted Button-quail, Hooded Robins, Brown Tree-creepers, and Black-chinned Honeyeaters which, for a change, were feeding on lerp in some very low foliage so offering easy observing. A Pipit was recorded in the adjoining paddock. Missing from the list were the resident Diamond Firetails. The customary mob of kangaroos was seen on the ridge and a couple of Turquoise Parrots back at the cars. By this time everyone was feeling hungry and in need of a cuppa so it was destination hall and kitchen!

As usual Friends produced some very tasty dishes for dinner which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Following the Annual General Meeting our guest speaker, Jim Blackney, North-east regional Manager for Trust for Nature presented an overview of the Trust's activities. The highlight of which was the introduction to its major acquisition in Victoria, the 30,000 hectare property, Ned's Corner. This expansive, expensive, former grazing property with Murray River frontage was acquired by the Trust in 2003. It preserves four major habitats, Salt Bush Plain, Riverine Red Gum, Mallee and Black Box.

The removal of stock has resulted in the regeneration of these habitats for both flora and fauna. Why the name 'Ned's Corner'?

The story goes that a shepherd called Ned had a hut on the bend of the river and the spot became known as Ned's Corner.

Swift Parrot / Regent Honeyeater Survey:

No Regent Honeyeaters can be found in the park at present. Swift Parrots are still around in the southern block and at Chiltern Valley No 2 Dam. The state survey recorded no Regent Honeyeater sightings and this has to be a cause for great concern. The New South Wales counts were much more encouraging with the count reaching 150+ at the time of writing.

Around the Park:

Dumping continues to be a problem for the Parks staff. Both garbage and dead animals have been noted over the past month. On the bright side the purple Hovea is in flower and some early Dwarf Greenhoods, *Pterostylis nana*, have been seen. Ironbark blossom is scattered and if you can find a productive tree you will find birds! Red Box is beginning to flower but the Red Stringybark is very slow. The Golden Wattle will be at its best over the next few weeks and the follow-up Varnish Wattle should be very showy this year. On the recently burnt Donchi Hill block there is a great germination of Varnish Wattle and a new population of the rare Tick Indigo *Indigofera adesmiifolia* has emerged.

From the AGM:

All office bearers and committee members were re-elected. Secretary: Neville Bartlett; Treasurer: Peter Gotham, Committee: John Hawker, Mark Carey, Phillip Seely and Eileen Collins.

Personal: Member Ian Temple is battling serious illness. Our thoughts are with you, Ian and Carole, at this difficult time.

Rainfall: July 60.4mm on 16 days. Year to date: 438mm over 155 days.

NB: This will be the final newsletter for unfinancial members. Thank you to all who have renewed their membership.

NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 4TH. WATTLE DAY

Meet at 9.00AM Chiltern Post Office Morning: weeds. Afternoon: birds, flowers and orchids

BYO lunch, chair, binocs, trowel and gloves. My spy tells me there is abundant Caper Spurge at Bartleyâ??s! Enquiries: Eileen 03 57 261 484

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN NATIONAL PARK inc MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

P.O. Box 26 CHILTERN 3683 To assist, please mark the envelope Membership.

Friends have achieved a great deal during the past year. Surveys for plants, birds and monitoring of mammal boxes, tree planting and weed control are just some of our contributions. Your support for our activities is valued and your membership renewal is vital to our cause. Membership expires on June

30th. Please ensure your contact details are current. Thank you.

Please find enclosed my membership of \$10 for 2005-6 The fee covers the whole family and includes 11 newsletters.

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Category

1. Newsletters

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