

Newsletter 141 June 2006

Description

Dear Friends,

Lack of rain required a change of activity for June. Our revegetation site at Depot is extremely dry, so much so that the initial flush of Capeweed has withered off and planting of shrubs is impossible. So it was nestboxes again, this time on the Cemetery Bushland Reserve where an adjacent landholder who has an unspoiled block of Ironbark has Sugar and Squirrel Gliders in his nest boxes. A couple of years ago while weeding on the reserve we disturbed a pair of Squirrel Gliders sheltering under bark and decided that nest boxes were required. So we christened our new foldable ladder and erected the boxes. While walking the block we removed a few feral wattles and young pines and collected some rubbish. Despite the dryness the Freesias are managing to grow along the edges of the block which border the cemetery and we hope to spray them next meeting.

At Depot we pruned some wattles that the roos had damaged and extended the guards to further protect them.. Quite a few wattles which emerged following the late spring rain were covered with branches until stakes can be put in. After morning tea and a brief meeting in the sun we inspected some old boxes. At Bartley's Block the last box inspected cheered us up no end. Usually occupied by gliders, this box contained a neat little stringybark nest, a couple of feathers, a piece of snakeskin, and a pile of scats in one corner. Almost certainly this is a Phascogale nest. The adjacent small stringybarks showed evidence of fresh stripping. So, we carried the ladder off to the cars and retired to Bartley's Brewery site for lunch.

We were disturbed to see the continued destruction of this lovely block by trail bikers. From the southern end to the northern end they have carved trails in the grassland. The Management Vehicles Only barriers mean nothing, they simply have carved another route through the bush.

The afternoon was spent bird watching. Most of the Noisy Friar-birds have departed and there were more smaller honeyeaters about. White-naped, Black-chinned, Brown-headed, Fuscous and White-plumed plus quite a few Eastern Spinebills. Robins and Golden Whistlers continued to be scarce. A single Yellow-footed Antechinus was spotted high up in an Ironbark, no doubt it had been feeding in the abundant blossom. Despite looking on the ground no orchids were found, just some rather tired looking rosettes.

Yes, everything is crying out for rain!

Nest box lifespan:

A recent research paper suggested the lifespan of nest boxes is perhaps 5 years. The ones we have been replacing have been in use for nearly 20 years. Over the years Bruce Quin made some repairs, mostly to the lids. Perhaps a feature of Bruce's boxes, the metal covering on the lids, acted as protection from the weather and extended the life.

Proposed trip to Terrick Terrick National Park on Saturday and Sunday September 9th/10th

Dear Friends: As discussed by the committee earlier this year we intend to hold a weekend camp out for Friends members.

This park is situated north of Bendigo near the small town of Mitiamo. This 3.880 ha park contains the most significant remaining area of the once extensive native grasslands of northern Victoria. Several species of national and state significance have been recorded there. The park supports over 100 species of birds including Plains Wanderer, Grey-crowned Babbler, Bush-stone Curlew and Barking Owl. The Mt Terrick Picnic Area has camping sites, picnic tables, toilets and park information. Gas stoves and BBQs may be used. Please note that this is a campfire free park. Arrival and departure times are up to individuals.

Activities for the weekend include bird watching, flora identification and there is the possibility of a spotlight walk stalking the Plains Wanderer providing the ranger is available and good weather prevails. The park has many kilometres of walking trails.

On Sunday those who are interested can travel to the northern sections of the Greater Bendigo Park for extra birding. Of particular interest would be the former Whipstick and Kamarooka State Parks . For those interested in coming please contact Mark Carey for further information on E/mail markcarey82@hotmail.com or 03 57 281 572. Thank you Mark for organising this weekend, let's hope the weather is kind.

Rainfall: May 22.2 mm over 8 days Yearly total to date: 95.2 mm over 25 days. Last year by May we had 257.6mm. It's dry!

Friends of Warbys: Next meetings: July 8th Pangerang Lookout , David: 0357 221 213 August 12th Cryptandra site 57218 937

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY JULY 1ST MEET AT CHILTERN POST OFFICE 9.00AM

Tree planting at Chiltern Valley No 2 Dam Contact: John Hawker 0357 281 642 BYO lunch, chair binocs, gloves. If rain has not fallen this activity will be changed.

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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1. Newsletters

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