



Newsletter 157 November 2007

## Description

### Dear Friends

There was no meeting in November due to the Friends trip to Ouyen and unforeseen circumstances preventing other members from working.

Much rain fell around the northeast but most of it missed Chiltern and the park. We were thankful for 18mm. Infra red camera

We have been successful in obtaining a Parks Victoria grant to purchase a Tree Top Camera which we will use for inspection of nest boxes. The camera was demonstrated on Nov 15th.



## Around the park

Chiltern Valley No 1 Dam is still providing good birding. Reed Warblers and Little Grassbirds are calling, an Australian Crane and a single Glossy Ibis was spotted in early November. Still no records of Latham's Snipe.

Cyanide Dam has finally dried up and it will take very heavy rain to replenish it. As a result the birdlife around that area has been reduced. Worse still the dry dam and part of its bank and the walking track is being trashed by trailbikers.

Bartley's Block is still a good birding spot, Painted Honeyeaters and Red-capped Robins are

breeding there. The Golden Everlastings make a colourful display on the open areas. The water levels in the dams are shrinking.

There are good numbers of Painted Honeyeaters and Sacred Kingfishers this year but honeyeaters in general remain scarce.

The bank along the southern end of Ballarat Road has a lovely show of the purple Finger Flower, *Cheiranthra cyanea*.



Delicate flowers of Pink Bindweed, *Convolvulus erubescens* can be found trailing along the ground



and Diggersâ?? Speedwell is flowering almost everywhere.



A walk along the eastern end of Koala Track is presently excellent both from a flora and bird point of view. After passing the cherry orchard the road descends into grassy forest with large old Long-leaf Box trees being the dominant species for a short stretch, The grassy and somewhat weedy understorey is still green in stark contrast to the rest of the park. There are lovely patches of Pink Bindweed *Convolvulus erubescens* trailing through the grass and along the bank is the often overlooked Curved Rice-flower *Pimelia curviflora*

There are numerous very vocal White-throated Gerygones and at least three pairs are building nests. Leaden Flycatchers and Red-browed Finches are also breeding. Sacred Kingfishers are very vocal. As the track rises and enters an area of Red Box there is a lovely show of Blue Pincushions, *Brunonia australis*



with sprays of yellow Spur Velleia, Fringe Lily *Thysanotus patersonii*, Bluebells and Ivy Goodenia. The Fringe Lilies are at their best in the morning as they close in the afternoon and are then easily missed. There is a pleasant walk along Koala Track to its junction with Skeleton Track (where you turn right) and back to Lancashire Gap Road where you turn right and walk until you reach the Koala Track entrance. The soil is granitic and the plants seem to have survived well in the harsh conditions.

Early morning is the best time to enjoy this walk.

I was hoping not to mention the surge of the Caper Spurge at Bartleyâ??s however a walk down there last week revealed many plants with as yet unripe seed heads badly in need of clipping off. They have mostly emerged from the clumps of Sedge which has protected them. Some have been clipped off.

They obviously responded well to the last fall of rain.

Elsewhere in the district reports keep coming in of Glossy Ibis in small numbers on wetlands so if you are travelling through and would like to see this distinctive ibis keep alert. Cockatiels have been seen in Rutherglen.

With the inland under great stress a few unexpected species may turn up. Please report them if you are lucky to see any.

Beechworth Historic Park Management Plan was launched by the Minister for Environment, Gavan Jennings at the Powder Magazine in Beechworth on November the 14th. The management plan for the Chiltern-Mt Pilot Park should be ready in the near future.

## Twitchathon

If you would like to join the Ovens and Murray group for the 2007 Twitchathon you may contact Darren on 0260 332 498 or Phillip on 0260 215 313

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Rainfall October 45.2 mm over 5 days. Yearly total: 467.3 mm over 91 days. Hopefully we will receive some summer rain.

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DECEMBER MEETING IS ON SATURDAY DECEMBER 1ST AT HONEYEATER PICNIC AREA

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 4pm

There will be a picnic tea, a walk and a spotlight walk BYO goodies, binocs, chair, repellent and torch.

Come along and celebrate a successful year. Contact: Eileen 03 57 261 484

### Category

1. Newsletters

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