

Newsletter 176 August 2009

Description

The August 2009 newsletter reports on tree planting at Chiltern Valley, birding in the park in Winter, a delightful story of fox control and curlew breeding, wildflowers in bloom and the progress on the signage for the bird hide in Chiltern Valley No 2.

Dear Friends <p>

The rainfall pattern continued for July and it's raining as I write in August. Very pleasing indeed. Although the morning looked grey and overcast with threatening rain our tree planting at Valley No 2 was completed without rain. The ground was wonderfully soft after two months of soaking rain and provided the best conditions we have ever had for planting. Our cheerful and hard working group soon had things underway and by eleven o'clock all was completed and the customary morning tea enjoyed.<p>

The majority of the plants consisted of understorey with some Yellow Box, Red Box and White Cypress Pines chosen for the more open areas. Previous plantings have done very well and some of the Golden and Goldust Wattle was beginning to flower.<p>

Hares have pruned a few of the smaller plants and seem particularly drawn to the Cypress Pines, many of which had their centres neatly nipped off.<p>

While we planted White-browed Babblers kept up their cheery contact calls and during morning tea Flame Robins were close by. The dam is roughly three quarters full and if the rains keep up the run off will top it up.<p>

We were joined in the afternoon by Murray Goulburn Birdwatchers who were spending some days in Chiltern. Members lunched with them at Cyanide Dam where Babblers, Brown Treecreepers, Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters were present. Some Black-chinned Honeyeaters passed through during lunch.<p>

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There have been sightings of Yellow-faced and Brown-headed Honeyeaters again, birds which seem to have been absent for a few months. No sightings of Regent Honeyeaters or Swift Parrots were recorded despite large areas of the park being visited over the weekend..<p>

An afternoon visit to Koala Track had our visitors quite excited to see twelve male Turquoise Parrots feeding quietly on the dried wireweed seed. Only one female parrot could be spotted amongst the group. Some weeks before it was estimated that there were 50+ parrots present. Other species in the same area were Scarlet Robin, Buff-rumped and Yellow-rumped Thornbills, European Goldfinch, Peaceful Dove and overhead a magnificent Wedge-tailed Eagle.<p>

Of Curlews and Foxes

A friend who is a fox shooter went to check on burrows that had been gassed. His two little terriers became very agitated at the base of a huge, dense Peppercorn Tree. Looking up Noel saw a dog fox which he promptly shot only to disturb two more dog foxes which he also shot.. The dogs kept up the barking and the vixen was put up and destroyed. A pair of Curlews is living close by, so hopefully they will now survive and breed.

Around the park

The continuing rains are a blessing. The Chocolate Lily leaves are plentiful and healthy. Some Grevillea alpina is in flower in various shades of reds and orange. Purple Hovea, Hardenbergia and Golden and Varnish Wattle are brightening the park.

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The small Ploughshare Wattle is out with its pale cream flowers and spiky leaves. Fungi and mosses which have been so scarce in past years are thriving in the continuing damp conditions. Echidnas are active and one can sneak silently up on them over the rain soaked ground. It's sad to see vandalism again in the form of smashed barriers at Honeyeater Picnic area and broken signage on Skeleton Track.

Wetland signage: This project has been finalised and we are awaiting delivery of the signs.

Membership

Thankyou to those who have renewed their membership. This will be the final posted newsletter to unfinancial persons.

Rainfall for July

61.2mm mm over 14 days. Yearly total: 290.4 mm over 50 days.

NEXT MEETING

AGM SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 5TH MEET AT CHILTERN POST OFFICE AT 1.30PM

We will meet our guest Gary Backhouse in the afternoon for a park walk. The AGM will be held prior to the dinner from 5.30-6pm. Dinner will be at 6.15pm. As this is being privately catered numbers will be limited to 40 persons. Members will be given preference. It is necessary to have firm numbers. Please ensure your place by returning the RSVP note below. Our guest speaker will treat us to an evening of wild orchids. Contact: Eileen 03 57 261 484

AGM DINNER SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 5TH

I/we will attend the AGM dinner on Saturday September 5th at 6.15 pm. Email and phone RSVP accepted. Phone 03 57 261 484 Please respond by August 20th.

Please indicate if you require a vegetarian meal/

Thankyou, Eileen

Category

1. Newsletters

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