



Newsletter 179 November 2009

Description

The November 2009 newsletter reports on Friends activities and the fading but still delightful spring wildflowers and wildlife activities. The December meeting will be held at Chiltern Valley No 2 and will be a picnic followed by spotlighting and no work!

Dear Friends

A small group of Friends continued the attack on the weeds in enclosure two at Tuan campground. Everyone had their ideas about how to tackle this job. Peter had the whipper snipper which proved excellent in spots where there were no small shrubs. A few of us used hedge shears to chop the grass at ground level as it had become too dry and tall to pull out. Despite the weed invasion, peas, dianella, native grasses and grevilleas were flowering. Enclosure three remains a challenge as there is an enormous number of small plants amongst the weedy grasses. Some rain would make working there a little more pleasant but that seems a vain hope at the moment. In enclosure one an area was covered with newspaper and mulch to protect some recently planted indigofera and grevillea. <p>The single Red Box trees planted three months ago in the newly ripped area are growing well and there is an abundance of small plants growing in the mulch. A few plants of the nasty weed Fierce Thornapple (*Datura ferox*) were removed. Summer rain triggers the germination of this weed and fortunately they are easy to remove while young.

Around the park

Spring is fading fast. Everlastings are providing the mass colour in most areas. A walk along the eastern end of Skeleton Track will reveal fringe lilies in flower. Be sure to take the walk before noon as they close by then. Grass trees are in flower and are attracting many butterflies, ants, beetles and moths.



A striking vine moth taking nectar from the flowers from a grass tree *Xanthorrhoea glauca*. This species of vine moth lays its eggs on mistletoe and the sharp eyes of Phillip saw it visit some mistletoe.

Chiltern Valley No 2 dam is still providing excellent birding for both wetland and bush birds. Bartley's Block is a picture of gold thanks to the masses of flowering everlatings.



Interestingly the flowers and stems were covered with ladybirds (good species) and hover flies. The old trees on the former house site are looking very stressed and even the Caper Spurge is not too happy which is a bit of a bonus!

Tuan Track walk has been popular if the diminishing number of pamphlets is any guide. Bird surprises: These both occurred in private gardens. A lone Regent Honeyeater called in at June and Peter's garden. Unfortunately it did not stay.

A small party of seven Black Honeyeaters turned up in my garden and have been here for three weeks.



They have taken over a large flowering eremophila and defied the efforts of the White-plumed Honeyeaters to dislodge them. They are also hawking insects. Black Honeyeaters have been recorded in the park on a few occasions almost always feeding in the flowering mistletoe around December and January.

Fuel reduction burn on Cemetery Bushland Reserve:

Parks Victoria conducted a burn on this block in early November. Friends were saddened to see so many of the dead trees burnt. These trees were home to much wildlife and we have witnessed Squirrel Gliders sheltering in the lifting bark of dead ironbarks. A lower section of the block has suffered badly with many live trees lost.



Friends recognise the need for and benefits of burns but seriously question the decision to burn this country in the spring. Autumn burns have been the custom for years.

Rainfall for October: 32.5 mm over 8 days. Yearly total: 433.8 mm over 91 days. A rather dry October. November is worse!

NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY DECEMBER 6TH CHRISTMAS TEA

Meet at the post office at 4pm OR go directly to Chiltern Valley No 2 Dam if you are coming later. BYO tea and something to share. Chair, repellent, torch and binocs. Spotlight walk on Nakeen Track. NO Work! Anyone is welcome. Contact: Eileen 03 57 261 484

2010 CALENDARS

Once again Neville has produced a lovely calendar which reflects on the past year. This year we are taking pre-paid orders for the calendars and a limited number will be printed. If you wish to order a calendar please fill in the attached form and forward it with payment to P.O.Box 60 Chiltern 3683. Calendar in padded bag, including postage, anywhere in Australia \$.27.50 Calendar to be collected \$20

International: postage and packing in small tube holding one calendar: USA \$14.85 UK \$18.15

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Please find enclosed cheque/money payable to Friends of Chiltern for \$ for calendars.

Name:

Address

Phone number Please NO mobiles.

Enquiries to: nulgerong@westnet.com.au or phone 03 57 261 484

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