



Newsletter 183 April 2010

Description

The April 2010 newsletter is now available and contains updates on the current conditions in the park, a report on the work completed at the last Friends activity day details of what is to be achieved at the next meeting. Dear Friends

Early morning rain cleared and working conditions were pleasant for our planting at the hide site. The bank below the hide was our target this month. After raking the area to even it out we laid hessian and pegged it down, then used fallen timber to stabilise it. Holes were made in the hessian and a variety of grasses, rushes and sedges were planted and then the area was covered with mulch. Although four sentences describe the activity it did take six of us nearly four hours to complete!

Halfway through the work a heavy shower forced us into the hide for morning tea and a meeting and nobody complained.

We enjoyed lunch and a chat in the sun on completion of the task. The large black snake which was present last meeting had shed its skin beside the hide as a reminder of its presence. After lunch a few of us inspected the original planting area and pulled up and stacked the stakes from plants that had died.

At the next meeting we plan to finish the hide planting and infill in this area as the conditions for establishing plants are very good. This summer has been wonderful for the young trees and it is especially pleasing to see the White Cypress Pines doing so well.

A visit to Valley No 1 on the way home was cut short by a sudden and chilling change of wind. The birds on the dam were few but interesting, 27 Black-fronted Dotterels, one beautiful male Chestnut Teal, a pair of Grey Teal with nine small young, two White-faced Herons, four Wood ducks and a circling Whistling Kite. The water level is very low and the old post and rail fence is exposed once more. This seems to be a regular occurrence in recent years.

Around the park

Autumn orchids recorded: *Pterostylis revoluta* the Autumn Greenhood; *Pterostylis parviflora*,



Red-tipped Greenhood and *Genoplesium* sp Midge Orchid. This tiny flowered orchid is often missed. Karen's photo shows the ripening ovaries showing a good set for this season.



Rock ferns which enjoyed the autumn rain are beginning to brighten the understorey and the odd Bluebell is in flower.

A surprise avian visitor:

At Honeyeater Picnic area on Friday April 16th Joseph's sharp eyes picked up a small bird with a lot of red on it! It was a Scarlet Honeyeater! Later two males were heard calling and quickly located. As far as records show it is a new record for the park. Swift Parrots are reasonably plentiful if you can detect their soft calls amongst the raucous honeyeaters. Chris Tzaros found some feeding quietly on the ground along Mt Pleasant Road. Feeding on the ripe, red and orange fruits of the satlbush, *Einadia nutans*



Nodding Saltbush and Einadia hastata Saloop. The summer rains ensured they produced well this year.



Please report all Swift Parrot sightings to Chris Tzaros Freecall 1800 665 766

The Regent Honeyeaters

are back but a lot of luck is needed to find one as they are rather reluctant to call at the moment. Please, if you see one give me a call as it is important to record the site and follow-up the movements. If you do see one try to see if it has leg bands and if possible record them. 03 57 261 484

It has been a good period for butterflies and moths post the rains. Some noted are: large Swift Moths; the pretty coloured Heliotrope Moth; black and white Magpie Moths with their orange and black banded abdomens which signals to would-be predators "I am distasteful"; hundreds of Little Blues and larvae of the Hakea Moth.



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Spiders

The The huge webs of the orb spiders are now very bedraggled as the females have made their golden egg sacs and died. Garden Orbs were many and varied this season. Some species eat their web each morning and erect it again after dusk.



In the garden the little yellow, white or green Flower Spiders are active. Some do not seem to worry about camouflage as I found a white one on a brilliant blue Salvia flower.





Reminder: If you are interested in the photos of species mentioned in this newsletter refer to the website.

Rainfall

March 2010: 96.0mm over 9 days. Yearly total to date: 129.0 over 13 days. Long may it continue!

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY MAY 1ST

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9am . BYO Lunch, chair, binocs, gloves, trowel and energy. Contact: Eileen: 0357 261 484. Mobile in the field only: 0407 486 480 Planting at Chiltern Valley No 2.

NEW DVD FEATURING DISTRICT BIRDS

One of our members has created a delightful DVD entitled 'A Twitcher's Guide to Birding in the North-east'.



There is no commentary on the DVD, just the lovely bird calls. All birds are named with common and scientific name. This DVD is for sale at \$15 plus \$2.30 postage and packing. If you would like to purchase a copy please forward your payment and postal details to: Friends of Chiltern N.P. P.O. Box 60 Chiltern 3683 OR purchase one from the Chiltern Post Office.

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