Newsletter 226 March 2014

Description

Dear Friends,

After a very hot summer our year finally began on a pleasantly warm day on March 1st. There was plenty to do and discuss so morning tea and lunchtime was a time to relax and enjoy meeting up again. At Frogs Hollow we removed some Genista which had taken advantage of the early summer rain. The planting of 2013 was inspected and the results were most pleasing with some very good growth. The survival rate is estimated at 85% thanks to the summer rain which helped the Genista. Extra plants will be ordered to fill in the gaps in autumn.

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The Klotz Track boxes were inspected and of the two, one was full of Sugar Gliders. During the walk to the boxes we collected some ancient rubbish as a bit of a warm up to the next activity. Moving on to Bartleyâ??s Block on the Howlong Road we donned our yellow vests and collected our rubbish bags for the big clean up. The road is now rubbish free from Bartleyâ??s Track to the northern end of the park. The section from town to Bartleyâ??s Track was cleaned by volunteers from the town so at least one town entrance is, for the present, rubbish free.

Clean up Aus Day 2104

After lunch several of us checked the Bartleyâ??s and Stringybark boxes and of the six boxes four had occupants. The day finished at the Cemetery Bushland Reserve where one of the four boxes was found crammed full of Sugar Gliders. The boxes are definitely good value.

Gliders

From the meeting:

A decision was made to raise the membership fee to $15. Planning for the Rutherglen block was discussed. The April meeting will be dedicated to beginning the clean up at the mine site.

Rubbish Febraury 2014

The planting will take place in June after the areas have been sprayed for weeds. We will need all hands on deck, so to speak, as this is quite a large project. There will be some mid month activities which will be announced later. Ongoing nest box checking will continue. There are 135 boxes to be monitored over the year. The weed sites, especially the Cootamundra Wattle and Olive sites, will be monitored and any seedlings dealt with. If you are around the park and find either of these species please let me know.

Autumn in the park.

Bartleyâ??s Block continues to provide interest. Birds for the weekend included a vagrant New Holland Honeyeater picked up by Moya, Scarlet Honeyeater female, White-throated Gerygone, Black-chinned and Brown-headed Honeyeaters and many Red-capped Robins in their non breeding plumage.

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Red-capped Robin (Female) (4551) Sm

The honeyeaters were frequenting the flowering mistletoe. A flock of Needletails and a little Eagle were other good sightings. The dams still have water in them and the upper dam is a good spot to sit and observe. Autumn produces interesting spiders. In the bush the massive golden webs of the Golden Orb Weaver can catch one unawares. Not so obvious are the the wheel weavers that work at night like a beautifully patterned and well camouflaged species of Eriophora spotted on a seed head of Cumbungi.

Wheel Weaver Eriophora sp

All the park dams still hold water. Recently a flock of twelve Turquoise Parrots was seen drinking at Honeyeater Picnic area (Cyanide Dam).

Algal pattern on Valley 1 Dam EC

There are two Freckled Ducks, among countless other waterbirds, on the swamp adjacent to Chiltern Valley No 1 Dam. A walk on the drying margins of the dams will reveal tiny mud plants, algal patterns on the waterâ??s edge.

An old post and rail fence posts exposed by the lowering levels. The old stone culvert at the eastern end of the dam is a tribute to the fine workmanship of the past.

Historic culvert V1

Rainfall

February 22.2 mm over 3 days. Year to date: 45.4 mm.

NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY APRIL 6TH

Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9.00AM. OR if you know where the Rutherglen Reserve is located be at the northern entrance off United Mine Road by 9.30 am. Byo lunch, drink,binocs, chair etc. Activity :Rubbish collection piling ready for machine removal. Handy tools: rake, wheelbarrow. Gloves. Contact in the field : .Eileen 0407 486 480

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Category

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