

Newsletter 231 August 2014

Description

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Dear Friends,

Greeted by a very frosty but sunny morning we set off to cover as many nest boxes as possible, as we needed to catch up with monitoring which has been restricted due to the wet meeting days. Over six sites we inspected nineteen boxes, eight of which contained sleeping animals. One box revealed sugar gliders curled up over a skeleton of their kind. No phascogales were recorded.

Armed with the new small spray we located and dealt with quite a bit of thriving Bridal Creeper. This small unit has enabled us to tackle isolated patches of this wretched weed and complement the parks spraying of known infestations.



There are wonderful patches of *Pterostylis nana* and *nutans* to be found. The Maroonhoods, *P pedunculata* are in bud and beard and sun-orchid leaves are abundant and the first flowers of the Early

Nancy and Yellow Stars were spotted. Purple Hardenbergia and Hovea along with stunning Golden and Silver Wattles are all harbingers of spring. The Golden Wattle forms a spectacular understorey in the Ryanâ??s Road area where the grey box is the dominant eucalypt.



An uncommon plant for the park is *Cryptandra amara*, Bitter Cryptandra. In the 1990â??s there was a luxurious stand along Rileyâ??s Road. Today it is reduced to many stunted plants due to herbivore grazing and known only from the one site in the Chiltern section of the park. Friends hope to have the patch protected.





MOSSES AND LICHENS OF THE PARK

These often overlooked plants of the park have been our focus in recent weeks and a section has been created in the biodiversity menu on the website. They are not the easiest of plants to identify but there is plenty of help at hand. Dr Graeme Ambrose has kindly offered help with identification. He has also offered two beautifully instructive and well illustrated papers for placement on the

website.

If you are interested in learning more about the importance of these small plants in the landscape, take photographs and browse the site to help with ID. The photos show some species found recently.
<http://friendsofchiltern.org.au/index.php/biodiversity/galleries/mosses-and-lichens-of-chiltern-mt-pilot-np>

[Usnea species Old Man's Beard](#)

[Cladia species P Spencer](#)

A useful recently published book is "Mosses of the Dry Forests of S E Australia" by Friends of the Box-Ironbark Forests. www.fobif.org.au will give you the details should you wish to purchase a copy.

[Sunburst Lichen Xanthoria species](#)

From the Ranger's Office

Parks staff have mainly been working on asset maintenance projects including removal of dangerous trees at Honeyeater Picnic Area.

White Box Walking Track has had to be closed due to a large subsidence of old mine workings as a result of heavy rain. It is expected the walking track will need to be realigned to avoid the damaged area.

Rangers have noticed a significant increase in illegal activities including timber removal, hunting and off road vehicle use and several substantial infringement notices have been issued.

MID-MONTH MEETING AUGUST

A working bee at the Rutherglen Block is planned for TUESDAY 12th.

Meet at the post office at 9.15am or if coming later go to the block.

Please let me know if you are able to attend. We will be checking the newly planted shrubs, planting some *Myoporum montanum*, a plant that has become scarce on the plains; removing olives and seeking out any new Boxthorn plants. Parks staff have cut down the huge olives and the large Boxthorns have been sprayed. We are well on the way to having a "clean" block. Bun of course for morning tea!!

Membership

Membership has fallen this year so if you have overlooked yours we would be pleased to hear from you. Thankyou to everyone who has renewed their membership with us. We are specially appreciative of the support from those who live far away. It is wonderful that you care about this special park and support the work of Friends. [Click here to access membership info](#)

Annual General Meeting: Saturday September 6th

Catering: Members are asked to bring along a favourite dish to share. There will be some supplementary catering. It would be helpful if members could indicate to me whether they will bring a sweet or savoury dish.

Hope to see you all on the day and feel free to bring a friend with you. All welcome.

RSVP by Tuesday September 1st

Our guest speaker for 2014 is Richard Loyn who will share his experiences from a recent trip to Madagascar. You may be assured of an interesting evening.

Richard has had a long career in ecology & wildlife conservation, mostly with the Victorian government (Forests Commission and Departments of Conservation etc), a lot of it based at the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research. He has worked mainly on ecology of forests, fire, wetlands and threatened species, trying to integrate the needs of people and wildlife.

He now has a part-time Research Fellowship at La Trobe University and runs a consultancy firm called Eco Insights, which keeps him busy, most recently helping train foresters in Papua New Guinea to conserve habitat for wildlife.

Richard has just been awarded the D. L. Serventy Medal for services to ornithology. The D.L. Serventy Medal may be awarded annually for outstanding published work on birds in the Australasian region. It has been awarded for the last 20 years and is the highest award offered to professional ornithologists by BirdLife Australia.

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 6TH

Meet at the Chiltern Post office at 2pm. Afternoon bush walk. Bring binoculars plus any other needs. . After the walk we will gather at the Senior Citizens's rooms around 5pm for drinks and nibbles before dinner at 6.30pm. AGM will be at 7.30pm and guest speaker at 8pm. Contact in the field 0407 486 480

Friends Facebook Page Mick Webster has created a Facebook page for Friends
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/556332777763388/>

RAINFALL

Rainfall: July 44.8 mm over 4 days. Year to date: 424 mm over 29 days

Category

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