

Newsletter 274 July 2018

Description

Friends of Chiltern Mt Pilot NP Newsletter 274 July 2018

Dear Friends,

We took a gamble on the weather and it paid off despite the forecast being for cold showers. The nest box team had a good morning, with three boxes housing Sugar Gliders and four showing evidence of Tuan activity including one with a nursery nest. Another box had some creative decoration in the form of large feathers protruding from its edges. Apparently this is not unusual.

In the North Road Bushland Reserve four Cootamundara Wattles and three Pinus Radiata were removed.

We welcomed junior member, Claire, who had an exciting time peering into nest boxes and seeing her first Sugar Gliders.

[Claire inspecting a nest box](#)

The Bartley's block crew tackled the rampant Jonquil bulbs and filled six huge bags with bulbs. The rain had softened the soil so they were fairly easy to remove. However the job is by no means finished! For once only a few Caper Spurge were found but that will not last as once the weather warms up more will emerge.

[Friends - Bartleys Block \(7th Jul 18\) \(3740\)](#)

David and Simon shovelled the pile of gravel left over from the track building into David's ute and spread it around the gate entrance. The area now looks tidy. Old metal rubbish was added to the wire pile for later removal.



Jennifer has provided plants to replace the six deceased ones at the Tuan Campsite planting and these have been planted.

The litter on the Howlong Road adjacent to Bartley's Block was an eyesore. Jennifer and Neil took on the task of cleaning it up. Thankyou both.

Around the Park

On a recent warm day Neil captured a skink which he identified as the Three-toed Skink, *Hemiergis decresiensis*. It was unhappy at being handled and vented its displeasure on Neil's finger. The photo shows the beautifully patterned ventral surface and the distinctive three toes with the middle toe being longer than the other two. This is a burrowing species often found under fallen timber or stones. Hence the importance of retaining good ground litter.



The early rains brought an influx of moths and many fell to night hunters. Even after death there is beauty, with raindrops on a perfect wing lying on the track.



Weed Report

A few olives have been re-treated in various areas, and Cootamundra Wattles have been removed. The main job this month has been clearing away the paddy melons at Grasslands block along with a few Bathurst Burrs. Two trailer-loads have been gathered and disposed of.

[Melom Haul pg](#)

A large prickly pear on the slopes of Mt Pilot has been removed.

[Prickly Pear Yeddonba Rd](#)

Thanks Mick and Tony.

Ranger's Report

Changes to staff

Luke Habeck has been appointed to ranger position. Luke is a Chiltern local who has worked on our field staff for the last 10 years and will transition to ranger job in early August.

We are also looking to recruit another ranger soon

One of our Field Staff, John O'Neill, will retire in early August after almost 30 years working in

Chiltern and Beechworth. Recruitment for his replacement will occur in September. Our District Manager for many years Dan McLaughlin has also taken a new position with Parks Victoria. Favourable weather conditions allowed completion of our grading program in June. Our focus over winter will be maintenance of visitor sites and replacement of damaged road signage. DELWP contractors have undertaken a control program for Noisy Miners with support from Friends members. This program is aimed at recovery efforts for Regent Honeyeaters.

A draft Annual Volunteer Activity Plan for 2018/9 has been prepared for the Friends Group. This plan is to ensure proposed projects are mutually beneficial and aligned to Parks Victoria's plans and priorities.

The plan outlines the activities of the group for the next year, ensures activities are safely managed and documented, provides appropriate approvals and ensures insurance coverage for the group. Management of Parks Victoria's volunteers is now done through Parks Connect. We encourage all members to register on this system.

Rainfall for June
To be updated asap

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Looking Back To Newsletter Number 5 - 1993

The old dead trees at Valley No 1 have since fallen into the water and Great Crested Grebes are now a rarity.

However the Grass-trigger Plants and Onion Orchids still thrive and provide an introduction into pollination for anyone interested.



[chiltern valley dam no1](#)

[Stylidium graminifolium - Grass Triggerplant](#)

Thank you Tony for placing them.

Planting Project at Grasslands

A big project is coming up! Planning is underway for the planting of the 4000 trees and shrubs at Grasslands. This is a Trust for Nature funded project and Friends have contracted to plant the trees and shrubs. The ground has been ripped and sprayed in readiness for the hoped for rains.

The weekend of the August meeting, on the 4th and 5th, has been set aside for this task. We will be needing all hands on deck for this work and there will be a job on the team for everyone. Lunch will be provided on both days. Details will follow closer to the date.

RSVP FOR GRASSLANDS PLANTING DAYS SATURDAY AUGUST 4TH AND SUNDAY AUGUST 5TH

