

Newsletter 330 August 2023

Description

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August field day

A glorious sunny day was most welcome indeed. The first task was to plant 20 more White Cypress Pines (*Callitris glaucophylla*) at the Northern end of the Rutherglen Natural Features Reserve. An earlier planting in 2022 had produced good results so it was time to plant more. Morning tea, with bun, was followed by more planting near the bee site off Lancashire Gap Road and then some re-vegetation of Bar Track.

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Planting in progress with each plant protected by a large wire netting guard



A very healthy plant from the 2022 planting.



Planting near the bee site off Lancashire Gap Road



Planting near the bee site off Lancashire Gap Road

Photos: Neville Bartlett

More re-vegetation of tracks is planned for the coming year.

Excellent recent webinars

Over the last few weeks, I have been privileged to attend two online events that will be followed up with articles in future newsletters. The first was a webinar entitled **“The Ecological Importance of Mistletoe”** that was organised by Birdlife Australia’s ACT-Yass Birds on Farms project and featured Professor David Watson from CSU and Kristy Peters from Birdlife Australia. David Watson gave an informative presentation about mistletoe and the many reasons why they play an important ecological role in our environment. Kristy Peters spoke about efforts to reintroduce mistletoe into a fire ravaged area in the Hunter Valley that is important for Regent Honeyeaters.

The second event, organised by Swamps, Rivers and Ranges, covered the Frog ID app and the project to re-introduce Growling Grass frogs into Winton Wetlands. Nadiah Roslan, Frog ID project coordinator from the Australian Museum gave a splendid presentation about the aims behind the creation of the Frog ID app and the impact that it has had on frog knowledge and research in Australia. Dr Lisa Farnsworth, Manager of restoration and adaptive management from Winton Wetlands, described a project that is re-introducing Growling Grass frogs from the Bendigo area back to the Winton Wetlands.

Woolly Wattle (*Acacia lanigera*) – August image in the 2023 calendar – Neil Blair

Acacia lanigera var. *lanigera* is one of 3 varieties of *A. lanigera* known as Woolly Wattle. Its distribution in Victoria is limited to the North East with 2 populations known, one at Pine Mountain near Walwa and the

other in the CMPNP. In Victoria it is a vulnerable threatened species. Victoria is however the southern end of its range and in NSW it is not threatened, it being more widespread and extending northward to Coonabarabran.

It grows in granite country on shallow granitic soils and in the CMPNP, can be found along Old Coach Rd between its crossing the Beechworth-Chiltern Rd and Wardens Rd and on the Mt Pilot Summit where the vegetation meets the bare rock. The best time to see it in flower is July, it being a winter flowering wattle in this area.



Woolly Wattle (*Acacia lanigera* var. *lanigera*). Photo: Mick Webster

Vale David Westmacott

Barbara Westmacott reports: “I regret to advise that my husband David sadly passed away in June after a battle with leukemia. He was a dedicated conservationist and had placed a Trust For Nature covenant on our a bush block that we have in Dunolly, Victoria.”

Barbara and David often made the journey to attend our AGMs.

Ranger’s Report Scott Cunningham

With the majority of our planning finalised and spring around the corner we have a number of projects in the pipeline. In the next week or so, contractors will be spraying the abundant thistles within the Rutherglen NCR as well as monitoring and controlling Illyrian Thistle that was detected last year in the

eastern section of the national park. We have tidied the carparking area at Honeyeater and begun some works to formalise some camping along Reedy Creek. Numerous unofficial tracks in the Donchi Hill area have been blocked off and we hope this continues the successful closures of Bar Track and tracks leading to the quarry. Thank you to the Friends that have assisted and begun to revegetate these areas. We are still experiencing firewood theft resulting in infringements issued although less than previous years. Thanks to those that have forwarded information that has helped in our efforts to deter firewood theft. Lastly, we are finalising recruitment of an ongoing ranger role to replace Hannah and hope to advise of the successful applicant in the next newsletter.

2023 AGM â?? Saturday 2nd September 2023

Plans are being made for our 2023 AGM at the Chiltern Senior Citizens hall. Our guest speaker for the AGM will be Dr. Alexandra Knight, who is an expert on frogs. At 4pm there will be a walk conducted by Dr Knight and that will be followed by a BYO dinner, the AGM and a talk entitled:

â??What we can learn from frogs â?? sensitive environmental indicators in a changing landscape.â?•

Dr. Alexandra Knight is an environmental science lecturer and researcher who works with communities to build improved knowledge and better understanding of Australian biodiversity and landscapes, and to develop adaptation pathways. She lectures and researches in the School of Agricultural, Environmental and Veterinary Sciences, Charles Sturt University.

Alexâ??s research incorporates approaches from both social and ecological sciences, taking her research across from the realm of science into that of society and enabling engagement with policy and management. This focus results from her extensive background in environmental practice, having worked with government and non-government agencies in regional Australia for 17 years. Alexandra has managed national parks, led local and bioregional biodiversity surveys, and developed and implemented collaborative programs with First Nations people, researchers, farmers and agencies to conserve Australian birds, mammals and frogs and increase community engagement in conservation activities. She has extensive experience in fire and threatened species management and in environmental planning.

Alexandra is committed to education, arousing curiosity about nature and embedding a desire for life-long learning. Alexandra currently lectures in environmental policy, urban green space planning and wildlife management. She leads transdisciplinary research projects focussed on freshwater and tidal wetland management, amphibian conservation, and building better approaches to managing and researching socio-ecological systems.

2024 Friends calendar â?? call for images

There will be a Friends calendar for 2024 in two formats (A3 and A4) as was the case for the 2023 calendar. We are seeking images that show aspects of the Park. Images will be reviewed by a selection panel. As the intent is to have the calendars ready and printed earlier than the last few years, images are needed by mid-September or earlier.

Rainfall July 2023: 55 mm. Total for the year to date 2023: 483 mm.
Fairly dry but Lake Anderson is still overflowing (just).

The corresponding total until the end of July 2022 was 546 mm.

The average annual rainfall for Chiltern is 689 mm.

Data supplied by Mick Webster.

NEXT MEETING ??? SATURDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER 2023

The dinner will be preceded by a walk conducted by Dr Alexandra Knight

Meet at the Chiltern Post Office at 4:00pm.

The Chiltern Senior Citizens Hall will be open beforehand so that food can be left in appropriate storage.

Dinner will be BYO plate and drinks. Please contact Helen Carse (0448 131 280) or Jennifer Davidson (0418 169 917) if you are coming so that a suitable range of dishes will be provided.

After dinner, we will hold the 2022-23 AGM and that will be followed by Dr Alex Knight's presentation
What we can learn from frogs sensitive environmental indicators in a changing landscape.

Dates for the remainder of 2023 and 2024

Several wildflower walks that are open to anyone will be held during spring. The planned dates are:

Wednesday 13th September 2023: Wattle walk in the Cyanide Road area.

Wednesday 20th September 2023: Muffler Track/All Nations Road areas.

Sunday 1st October 2023: Donchi Hill area.

Wednesday 11th October 2023: Tower Hill area.

Saturday 5th November 2023: Mt Pilot section.

For 2023: Sunday 1st October, Saturday 4th November and Sunday 3rd December 2023.

For 2024: Sunday 4th February, Saturday 2nd March, Sunday 7th April, Saturday 4th May, Sunday 2nd June, Saturday 6th July, Sunday 4th August, Saturday 7th September, Sunday 6th October, Saturday 2nd November and Sunday 1st December 2024.

Rule of Thumb: For even months, the field day is held on the first Sunday of the month and for odd months, it is held on the first Saturday of the month.

Membership ??? It's time to renew

Memberships expired on June 30th 2023. Thank you to all who have taken out membership this year. We hope you will continue your support. Friends have achieved a great deal during the past few years. Surveys for plants, birds and monitoring, maintaining and surveying mammal boxes, tree planting, weed

