

Newsletter 323 December 2022

Description

Friends of Chiltern Mt Pilot NP Newsletter #323 December 2022

FRIENDS OF CHILTERN MT-PILOT NATIONAL PARK, Inc.

Correspondence to: Tony Murnane Secretary/Treasurer: anthonymurnane9@gmail.com

Newsletter: Neville Bartlett: neville@nrbartlett.com.au

Christmas Gathering at the Grasslands Block â?? Neville Bartlett

A group of us assembled at the top of the hill at the Grasslands Block for a Christmas get together to mark the end of another year. The weather was very pleasant and the location a delight in the shade under a large eucalypt.

Grasslands Block in December 2022



Photo: Neville Bartlett



Photos: above and below Tony Marsh



Now that I have stepped down as President of the Friends group, I would like to thank all of those who have made a contribution to the group and its activities. The changes in my life over the last year or so have made me more aware and appreciative of the contributions made by others often when they have substantial commitments in other aspects of their lives. There are also many people who make more modest contributions that add up to be important to the group as a whole. All of these contributions matter and we are very appreciative of them.

Helen Carse deserves a special mention for all of the work that she did to get plants organised for the various plantings during the year. Helen stepped up to the challenge and was supported by several others, including Margaret Considine, Jennifer Davidson, Tony Murnane and Simon Bennett, who made sure that everything was ready for the planting days. The team work involved and the outcome was most impressive.

We wish all of our members and supporters a great festive season and all the best for 2023.

Powerful Owls (*Ninox strenua*) â?? January image in the 2023 calendar

The image in the 2023 calendar was taken in October 2006 in the Park near Pine Road (opposite the HVP pine plantation). The parents of these juvenile owls were also photographed on the same day. The juveniles are a very similar size to the adults and must require enormous amounts of food to meet their requirements before they become independent.

This area in the Park has been popular with Powerful Owls as there are occasional reports of sightings by field naturalists in the same general area. Closer to Chiltern, Simon Bennett has reported seeing and hearing Powerful Owls in the Park near his place in 2017 and more recently observed an owl pellet and further calls while listening for Barking Owls. This means that Powerful Owls are certainly present in the Park.

Ranger's Report by Brian Pritchard

Thank you to the Friends Group for their efforts in the park this past year and recognise the challenges of using Park Connect and Parks Victoria's requirements for Working with Children's Checks.

The recent weather has caused significant damage to road network in the park. We are trying to access and undertake assessments of damage as part of an insurance claim to fund repairs but many roads are still closed by fallen trees and other damage.

Many of our usual preparations for summer including slashing and mowing of key sites have been delayed by responses to floods and we are expecting a busy visitor season particularly with many popular sites along the Murray River impacted by flood closures.

Recent checks have revealed infestations of the Regionally Prohibited noxious weed Illyrian thistle (*Onopordum illyricum* L.) in the park. Details of the plant can be found here <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/IllyrianThistle>

The locations will be added to DJPR's watch list until deemed eradicated, absent for at least 15 years or there is a change to policy. It is one of thirteen known sites in the North East CMA region and if you see them please let us know.

Compliments of the season from all our rangers and we are look forward to catching up with the committee early next year to plan next year's program.

Friends 2023 Calendars

The 2023 calendars, in A3 and A4 format, are still available from.

- Chiltern Post Office, 54 Main Street, Chiltern Vic 3683
[Thank you very much to Emma and Matt Williams at the Chiltern Post Office for their great support in selling our calendars].
- Rutherglen Wine Experience, 57 Main Street, Rutherglen Vic 3685
- From Tony Murnane

(Secretary/Treasurer by Friends of Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park)

69 Conness Street, Chiltern Vic 3685

Email: anthonymurnane9@gmail.com

Thank you very much to the photographers who have contributed images: Jan Palmer, Leshya Perkins, John Hawker, David Skinner, Mick Webster, Philip Dubbin, Brian Pritchard, Neville Bartlett and Robert Boehm.

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Friends of Chiltern-Mt. Pilot National Park 2023 Calendar



Grasslands Block revegetation work in 2022

Photographers

Jan Palmer, Leshya Perkins, John Hawker, David Skinner, Mick Webster,
Philip Dubbin, Brian Pritchard, Neville Bartlett and Robert Boehm



Website: www.friendsofchiltern.org.au
Email: friendsofchiltern@gmail.com

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Background image: Red Box - Eucalyptus polyanthemus

Rainfall November 2022: 154mm. Total for the year-to-date 2022: 1,171mm. This is the wettest year since 1939 and the second wettest since records have been kept (137 years). The corresponding total to the end of November 2021 was 816mm with the full year 2021 being 887mm. The average annual rainfall for Chiltern is 689 mm.

Data supplied by Mick Webster.

NEXT MEETING â?? SUNDAY 5th FEBRUARY 2023

Activities that are expected include (i) weeding at Bartleyâ??s Block followed by a walk around the area and (ii) olive removal and mammal nest box checking at the Rutherglen Natural Features Reserve.

More details will be available closer to the day.

Meet at the Chiltern Post Office at 9:00am.

Dates for 2023

For 2023: Sunday 5th February, Saturday 4th March, Sunday 2nd April, Saturday 6th May, Sunday 4th June, Saturday 1st July, Sunday 6th August, Saturday 2nd September, Sunday 1st October, Saturday 4th November and Sunday 3rd December 2023.

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.

Category

1. Newsletters

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Author

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